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THE COMPLAINT OF NATURE

A. De Lille

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YALE STUDIES IN ENGLISH  
ALBERT S. COOK, EDITOR

XXXVI

THE COMPLAINT OF NATURE

BY  
*Alain de Lille*  
ALAIN DE LILLE

TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN

BY  
DOUGLAS M. MOFFAT



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*De flunctu matris ac*

## PREFACE

The connection of the *De Planctu Naturæ* with Chaucer's *Parlement of Foules* and with the *Roman de la Rose*, the increasing frequency of references to it in works of scholarship, and its inaccessibility save in its peculiar Latin, have furnished the reasons for this translation. The importance of Alain's work lies wholly in what it prompted; by itself it would have long since been justly forgotten. The theologian whose great stores of recondite learning made him the 'Doctor Universalis' of his day, the 'Alain who was very sage,' the 'Doctor SS. Theologiæ Famosus,' is now known chiefly because of two lines in the blithe and famous poet of early England. He is distinctly of that number to whom the interests of scholarship alone give any present life. Still, in the eye of scholarship his importance is not inconsiderable. Not only the great interest attending everything which has to do with Chaucer, with the sources from which he drew, and with the very hints which he throws out so lightly, but also the extensive influence which the *De Planctu Naturæ* exerted on Jean de Meun's part of the *Roman de la Rose*, give him a position which all investigators in these fields of literature must recognize. The statement of Langlois that 'more than five thousand verses of the *Roman de la Rose* are translated, imitated, or inspired by the *De Planctu Naturæ*' is excellent authority that this mysterious scholar of the Middle Ages, whose very identity is unascertained, was of those who beget kings in literature, though he himself were none.

It is difficult to render the Latin of Alain into a translation which shall be at once accurate and yet not too much at variance with the fundamental

standards of good English literature. Truly, as was said by Robert Holkoth long ago, the *De Planctu Naturæ* is ‘metro et prosa compositum scientifice multum et curiose.’ Those repetitions, those fantastic circumlocutions, those wonderful wild flowers of metaphor which grow up constantly around him, leave on the translator’s hands a multitude of words, fluttering over an embarrassing paucity of ideas, for which English synonyms and approved figures of English speech are manifestly few or lacking. The present translator hopes that he is not chargeable too heavily with the weaknesses of a compromise. It has not been thought advisable to render into anything but prose those portions of the original which are in verse.

I have been unable to find any thoroughly good text of the *De Planctu Naturæ*. The one which I have used as a basis is that of Thomas Wright, found in *Satirical Poets of the Twelfth Century*, Vol. 2 (Rolls Series, London, 1872); but several of the variants which he notes, and several from the text of Migne in the *Patrologia Latina*, Vol. 210 (Paris, 1855), which Wright does not note, have been adopted, and a few emendations have been made. To all such changes attention is called in the foot-notes.

I owe many thanks to Professor Charles U. Clark, of Yale University, and to Dr. Richard M. Gummere, of Haverford College, for their careful revision of large portions of the translation. To Professor Albert S. Cook, of Yale University, at whose suggestion the work was undertaken, I have been greatly indebted for help and guidance at every stage.

D. M. M.

YALE UNIVERSITY,  
May 2, 1908.

# THE BOOK OF ALAIN ON THE COMPLAINT OF NATURE.

## METRE I.

*In lacrimas risus, in luctus gaudia verto.*

I change laughter to tears, joy to sorrow, applause to lament, mirth to grief, when I behold the decrees of Nature<sup>1</sup> in abeyance; when society is ruined and destroyed by the monster of sensual love; when Venus, fighting against Venus, makes men women; when with her magic art she unmans men. It is not pretense that travails with sorrow, O adulterer! nor the tears of pretense, nor dissimulation; rather is it grief, and birth itself is given to sorrow. The Muse requests, this very grief commands, Nature implores that, as I weep, I give them a mournful song. Alas! whither<sup>2</sup> has the loveliness of Nature, the beauty of character, the standard of chastity, the love of virtue departed?<sup>3</sup> Nature weeps, character passes away, chastity is wholly banished from its former high station, and become an orphan. The sex of active nature trembles shamefully at the way in which it declines into passive nature. Man is made woman, he blackens the honor of his sex, the craft of magic Venus makes him of double gender. He is both predicate and subject, he becomes likewise of two declensions, he pushes the laws of grammar too far. He, though made by Nature's skill, barbarously denies that he is a man. Art does not please him, but rather artifice; even that artificiality cannot be called metaphor; rather it sinks<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Reading *Naturam*, with Migne.

<sup>2</sup> Reading *quo*, with Migne.

<sup>3</sup> Reading *secessit*, with Migne.

into viciousness. He is too fond of logic, with whom a simple conversion causes the rights of Nature to perish. He strikes on an anvil which emits no sparks. The very hammer deforms its own anvil. The spirit  
 20 of the womb imprints no seal on matter, but rather the plowshare plows along<sup>1</sup> a sterile beach. Thus the iambic measure goes badly with the dactylic foot of earthly love, in which always the long syllable does not permit a short. Though all the beauty of  
 25 man humbles itself before the fairness of woman, being always inferior to her glory; though the face of the daughter of Tyndaris is brought into being,<sup>2</sup> and the comeliness of Adonis and Narcissus, conquered, adores her; for all this she is scorned, although she speaks  
 30 as beauty itself, though her godlike grace affirms her to be a goddess, though for her the thunderbolt would fail in the hand of Jove, and every sinew of Apollo would pause and lie inactive, though for her the freeman would become a slave, and Hippolytus, to enjoy her  
 35 love, would sell his very chastity. Why do so many kisses lie untouched on maiden lips, and no one wish to gain a profit from them? These once pressed on me would sweeten my lips with flavor, and, honeyed, would offer a honeycomb to the mouth; the spirit  
 40 would go out in kisses, all given over to the mouth, and play on lips with itself. So that until I should in this way die, my course finished, I, as another self, would in these kisses enjoy a happy life to the utmost. Not only does the adulterous Phrygian pursue  
 45 the daughter of Tyndaris, but Paris with Paris devises unspeakable and monstrous acts. Not only does Pyramus seek the kisses of Thisbe through the chink, but no small opening of Venus pleases him. Not only does the son of Peleus counterfeit the bearing

<sup>1</sup> Reading *in*, with Migne.

<sup>2</sup> Reading *formetur*, with Migne.

of a maiden, that so to maidens he may prove himself dear, but he wickedly gives away the gift of Nature for a gift, in selling for the love of money his sex. Such deserve anathema in the temple of Genius, for they deny the tithes of Genius and their own duties.

65

## PROSE I.

*Cum haec elegiaca lamentabili ejulatione crebrius  
recenserem.*

While I with sorrowful lament was repeating these elegies over and over again, a woman glided down from the inner palace of the impassable heavens, and appeared, hastening her approach to me. Her hair, which shone not with borrowed light but with its own, and which displayed the likeness of rays, not by semblance, but by native clearness surpassing nature, showed on a starry body the head of a virgin. Twin tresses, flowing loosely,<sup>1</sup> neither forsook the parts above nor yet disdained to smile upon the ground with a kiss. The line of a slender necklace, crossing itself obliquely, divided the strife of her hair; nor was this ever<sup>2</sup> a blemish in her appearance, but rather commanded its beauty.<sup>3</sup> And a golden comb smoothed into the dance of due orderliness the gold of her hair,<sup>4</sup> and wondered to have found a countenance agreeing, for the gold of fancy imposed upon the vision the false conclusion of harmonious color. But in truth her forehead, wide and full and even, was of the milk-white lily in color, and seemed to vie with the lily.<sup>5</sup> Her eyebrows, starry in golden brightness, had neither

<sup>1</sup> Reading *quem*, with B.

<sup>2</sup> Reading *umquam*, with Migne.

<sup>3</sup> Reading *vultui erat detimento, sed praeerat decori*, with Migne.

grown unduly into a forest of hairs, nor fallen into unmeet scantiness, but between both held a mean. The clear calm of the eyes, which attracted with friendly light, offered the freshness of twin stars. Her nose, fragrant with lovely odor, and neither out of measure low nor unduly prominent, had a certain distinction. The nard of her breath gave the nose banquets of delicate perfume. Her lips, gently rounded, invited the tyros of Venus to kisses. Her teeth, by some harmony of color, had the appearance of ivory. The glowing fire of her cheeks, kindled with the light of roses, with soft flame cheered her face; and this in turn chastened the pleasing warmth with cool whiteness—like rose-color on fine linen. Her smooth chin, fairer than crystalline light, wore a silvery brightness. Her neck, while not unduly long, was molded gracefully, and did not allow the nape to be close to the shoulders. The apples of her breasts promised the ripeness of glorious youth. Her arms, beautifully formed for the delight of the beholder, seemed to ask for embraces. The finely drawn curve of her waist, which had the mark of due moderation, brought her whole presence to the height of perfection. And faith spoke other parts, which a more secret habitation held aside, to be even better. For in her body lay unapparent a more beautiful form, of whose joys the countenance offered a foretaste: yet, as this very form made known, the key of Dione had never opened the lock of its chastity. And although the joy of her loveliness was so great, yet she tried to blot out the smile of her beauty with precious tears. For a stealthy dew, sprung from the welling of her eyes, proclaimed the flow of inward grief, and her very face, cast to earth with chaste modesty, told of some injury done to the virgin her-

self. The sparkling crown of a regal diadem, shining with dances of gems, brightened high on her head. No base alloy of gold, derogate from high worth, and deceptive to the eye with false light, supplied its substance, but the pure nobility of gold itself. With marvelous revolution and ceaseless turning, this diadem travelled from east to west, and then by backward motion was continually restored to its rising. And its incessant performing of this, and its constant journeying to its starting-place, seemed almost a useless motion. Some of these gems at one time offered to the sight miracles of fresh day in the new sun of their light ; but at another time by eclipse of their brilliancy seemed banished from the palace of the same diadem. Others, which were fixed, maintained the vigil of their sparkling, and were constant watchers. Among these a circle, shining in the likeness of the zodiacal curve, and glittering with chains of precious stones, cut across the thickly starred space. And on this a group of twelve gems seemed, from the advance of its numbers and from its especial splendor, to demand supremacy over the others.

Furthermore, in the front of the diadem three jewels, by the bold pride of their beams, supplanted and out-shone the other nine. The first stone condemned darkness to exile by its light, and cold by its fire. On this, as the skilful deceptions of a picture manifested, there blazed the form of a lion. The second, which was yet not inferior to the first in light, flashed in a more prominent position in this same part of the diadem, and seemed to look down on the other stones almost with indignation. On this, in a perfect picture of the reality, a crab with varying and conflicting motion went backward as it went forward, retreated as it progressed, and seemed to advance behind its

own self. The third stone redeemed the scant brightness of a stone set over against it by the abundant wealth of its own clear light. On this, as a truthful picture asserted, the mythical children of Leda advanced and welcomed each other with mutual embraces. In like manner, three stones, whose power was of second degree, had set their thrones in an opposite part. Of these the first, with little drops of moisture, gave the likeness of tears, and saddened its look with counterfeit weeping. On this, as the fancy of skilful engraving had drawn and set forth, the pitcher of the Idæan youth gurgled with flowing stream. The second stone kept all resting-places for warmth out of its dominion, and with icy numbness claimed winter for its guest. On this a picture gave, by an illusive likeness of goat's wool, the hairy pelt of a goat. The third stone, which had the appearance of crystalline light, prophesied with banner of cold the coming of winter. On this the old Hæmonian with diligent bending of the bow threatened wounds, yet never made good his threats. Playing upon another beautiful side, three mild and fair gems delighted the eyes. The first of these, aflame with the glow of rosy color, gave to view a rose; and in it a bull showed the well-known marks of his head, and was seen thirsting for battle. Another, of which the lustre was exceptional, blessed the companies of its fellows with grace and kindliness. On this a ram gloried in the nobility of its head, and demanded the leadership of the flock. The third, which had a greenish hue, cherished within it an emerald-like balm to freshen the sight. On this, within a fancied river, fish swam according to their kind, and sported in great numbers along the shore. On the opposite side, the shining beauty of a group of three stars sparkled with glad

delight. Of these stones the first, beaming with the golden sun of its own splendor, wore the grace of unwearying beauty. On this, as the poetical fancy of the cutting showed, a virgin, by her excelling fairness, like an Astræa rivaled the stars. The second neither wantoned in excessive splendor nor begged the sparks of a meagre glory, but rejoiced in a moderate flame. And on this, below the steady tongue of a balance, in a truthful and yet artistic representation, a pair of scales foretold the trial of weights. The third, the faces of which turned and alternated, now promised a kindly clearness, now gave itself up to the clouds of obscurity. On this the figure of a scorpion stood out, and presaged with its face laughter, with the sting of its tail tears.

Moreover, under the stations of these twelve stones a sevenfold array of gems kept up, with a continual circling, a marvelous sort of play and pleasing dance. Nor did this dance lack the sweetness of melodious sound. Now it frolicked in little notes, now it quickened into tones rich and swelling, and now, with stronger trump, advanced into the full burst of harmony, the depth of which stirred delight in our ears, and brought the first joys of sleep to our eyes. For since it is that moderate listening keeps away discontent, so excess brings on weariness; and the drowsy hearing faded, tired with the full and excessive melody. These seven stones, though not held subject to the diadem itself by any bands of connection, yet never deserted their fellowship of the upper stones. The highest was a diamond. This, more economical of movement than the others, but more spendthrift of ease, delayed very long in the completion of its wide orbit. With such frostiness and great cold did it slowly move that its essential form gave proof that it had

been born under the Saturnian star. The second was an agate, which, from its path being close at hand, was more easily seen than the others. Its effect was  
165 with some to change hate to love, and with others by its commanding virtue and power to render imperfect charity perfect; for its kindly operation asserted it to be, by close relationship of nature, of a family with the star of Jove. The third was an asterite, in  
170 which the dominion of heat had taken its station, and where was gathered the energy of the star Mars and its peculiar quality preserved. This, with threatening countenance of terrible splendor, warned destruction to others. The fourth was a ruby, having the likeness  
175 of the sun. With its streaming candle this banished the shades of night, and put to sleep the eclipsed lamps of its fellows. Now in the regal authority of majesty it ordered the others to make way, and now brought to the disturbance a quiet power. Then with  
180 a sapphire came an amethyst, pressing on the former's tracks, and tending it almost as a servant, yet never prejudiced by the quality of the other's light. Apart from the sapphire a little space, it either ran beside it round its orbit, or followed, or the one star lagged  
185 and granted the other the concession of going first. Of these two stones, the first by its harmonious quality gave the effect of the Mercurial star; the other, the effect of the Dionean. The last stone was a pearl, which was set in the rim of the flashing crown, and  
190 which shone with another's light, begging the aid of lustre from the ruby. Within the presence of the latter's radiance it either increased in the growth of its beam of light, or reached its full and shrank, as if it worshiped the ruby; and it petitioned that it  
195 should be re-adorned with the fires of its brother, and wear the beauties of that light renewed. Now it re-

paired the losses of its wasted round by fixed and regular succor; now, shorn of its beams, it lamented the loss of its proper majesty, for this was silvery with crystal splendor, answering to the appearance of the lunar star. The bright nobility of this diadem by all these glories revealed the likeness of the firmament.

A garment, woven from silky wool and covered with many colors, was as the virgin's robe of state. Its appearance perpetually changed with many a different color and manifold hue. At first it startled the sight with the white radiance of the lily. Next, as if its simplicity had been thrown aside and it were striving for something better, it glowed with rosy life. Then, reaching the height of perfection, it gladdened the sight with the greenness of the emerald. Moreover, spun exceedingly fine, so as to escape the scrutiny of the eye, it was so delicate of substance that you would think it and the air of the same nature. On it, as a picture fancied to the sight, was being held a parliament of the living creation. There the eagle, first assuming youth, then age, and finally returning to the first, changed from Nestor to Adonis. There the hawk, chief of the realm of the air, demanded tribute from its subjects with violent tyranny. The kite assumed the character of hunter, and in its stealthy preying seemed like the ghost of the hawk. The falcon stirred up civil war against the heron, though this was not divided with equal balance, for that should not be thought of by the name of war where you strike, but I only am struck. The ostrich, disregarding a worldly life for a lonely, dwelt like a hermit in solitudes of desert places. The swan, herald of its own death, foretold with its honey-sweet lyre of music the stopping of its life. There

on the peacock Nature had rained so great a treasure-store of beauty that you would think she afterwards would have gone begging. The phoenix died in its <sup>235</sup> real self, but, by some miracle of nature, revived in another, and in its death aroused itself from the dead. The bird of concord<sup>1</sup> paid tribute to Nature by decimating its brood. There lived sparrows, shrunk to low, pygmean atoms; while the crane opposite went <sup>240</sup> to the excess of gigantic size. The pheasant, after it had endured the confinement of its natal island, flew into our worlds, destined to become the delight of princes. The cock, like a popular astrologer, told with its voice's clock the divisions of the hours. But <sup>245</sup> the wild cock derided its domestic idleness, and roamed abroad, wandering through the woody regions. The horned owl, prophet of misery, sang psalms of future deep sorrowing. The night owl was so gross with the dregs of ugliness that you would think that <sup>250</sup> Nature had dozed at its making. The crow predicted things to come in the excitement of vain chatter. The dubiously colored magpie kept up a sleepless attention to argument. The jackdaw treasured trifles of its commendable thieving,<sup>2</sup> showing the signs of in-<sup>255</sup> born avarice. The dove, drunk with the sweet Dionean evil, labored at the sport of Cypris. The raven, hating the shame of rivalry, did not confess for its brood its own offspring, until the sign of dark color was disclosed, whereupon, as if disputing with itself it acknowl-<sup>260</sup> edged the fact. The partridge shunned now the attacks of the powers of the air, now the traps of hunters, now the warning barks of dogs. The duck and the goose wintered, according to the same law of living, in their native land of streams. The turtle-dove, <sup>265</sup> widowed of its mate, scorned to return to love, and

<sup>1</sup> Migne reads *ciconia*, stork.

<sup>2</sup> Lat. *latrocinio laudabili*.

refused the consolation of marrying again. The parrot on the anvil of its throat fashioned the coin of human speech. There the trick of a false voice beguiled the quail, ignorant of the deceit of the serpent's figure. The woodpecker, architect of its own small house, <sup>27</sup> with its beak's pick made a little retreat in an oak. The hedge-sparrow, putting aside the role of step-mother, with the maternal breast of devotion adopted as its child the alien offspring of the cuckoo; but the offspring, though the subject of so great a boon, <sup>28</sup> yet knew itself not as own son, but as stepchild. The swallow returned from its wandering, and made with mud under a beam its nest and home. The nightingale, renewing the complaint of its ravishment, and making music of harmonious sweetness, gave excuse <sup>29</sup> for the fall of its chastity. The lark, like a high-souled musician, offered the lyre of its throat, not with the artfulness of study but with the mastery of nature, as one most skilled in the lore of melody; and refining its tones into finer, separated these little notes <sup>30</sup> into inseparable chains. The bat, bird of double sex, held the rank of cipher among small birds. These living things, although as it were in allegory moving <sup>1</sup> there, seemed to exist actually.

Fine linen, with its white shaded into green, which <sup>31</sup> the maiden, as she herself shortly afterward said, had woven without a seam, and which was not of common material, but rejoiced in a skilled workmanship, served for her mantle. Its many intricate folds showed the color of water, and on it a graphic picture told of <sup>32</sup> the nature of the watery creation, as divided into numerous species. There the whale fought with cliffs, and rushed on and rammed the forts of ships with the rock of its hugely towering body. The sea-dog, (the noisy sound of the name of which is doubly <sup>33</sup>



confusing, since it never barks), hunted the hares of its world in the glades of the sea. The sturgeon offered the excellence<sup>1</sup> of its flesh to royal tables as a special blessing. The herring, that most common  
305 fish, relieved the hunger of the poor with its body which is shared by all. The plaice atoned by its delectable savor for the absence of meat in the forty days rigor. The mullet, with the sweet spices of its flesh, enticed the palates of those who tasted. The trout was baptized on the open sea and entered into the salt gulfs, and was known by the name of salmon. Dolphins by prophetic appearance foretold to ships the rage of the sea to come. There was a fish with the lower members of a siren, and with the face of a man.  
315 The luna, bereft of its own light, revenged, seemingly in spite, its private injury on the shell-fish; but the latter, as if laboring in corporeal new moon, atoned for the loss. To these dwellers in the regions of the brine had been assigned the middle portion of the  
320 mantle. Its remaining portion held migratory fish, which wandered in various streams, and had their haunts in their own land of fresher water. There the pike, with tyrannical compulsion and not from warranted necessity, imprisoned its subjects in the dun-  
325 geon of its belly. The barbel, from its small size not renowned, lived with the common fish on more friendly terms. The shad accompanied the vernal season, and offered with the joys of spring the delights of its savor, greeting the tastes of men with its approach.  
330 The small muræna, slit with many an opening, gathered the germs of fever for persons dining. The eel, which copied the nature of the serpent, was thought because of its like trait to be the serpent's descendant. The perch, armored with javelins of spines, shunned the

<sup>1</sup> Reading *nobilitatem*, with Migne.

insults of the sea-wolf the less. The cat-fish made <sup>333</sup> up in its swollen head that which it lost in the slimness of its lower body. These pictures, finely drawn on the mantle in the manner of sculpture, seemed by miracle to swim.

A damask tunic, also, pictured with embroidered <sup>340</sup> work, concealed the maiden's body. This was starred with many colors, and massed into a thicker material approaching the appearance of the terrestrial element. In its principal part man laid aside the idleness of sensuality, and by the direct guidance of reason pen- <sup>345</sup> etrated the secrets of the heavens. Here the tunic had undergone a rending of its parts, and showed abuses and injuries. But elsewhere its parts were united in unbroken elegance, and suffered no discord nor division. On these the magic of a picture gave <sup>350</sup> life to the animals of the earth. There the elephant, of prodigious size, came forward in the field, and doubled the body given by nature by a manifold usury. The camel, misshapen in the ruggedness of its rough frame, ministered to the wants of men like <sup>355</sup> a bought slave. There the forehead of the gazelle was seen to be armed with horns in place of a helmet. The bull, pawing the ground with its feet, and roaring with horrible bellowings, foretold the thunderbolts of its warfare. Oxen, which refused the martial <sup>360</sup> exercise of the bulls, stood gaping like rustics, in servile employment. The horse was carried on by hot courage, and fought in aid of its rider, breaking spear with soldier. The ass offended the ears with horrid noises, like a singer of burlesque perpetrating <sup>365</sup> barbarities on music. The unicorn, lulled to sleep in a virgin's bosom, met in sleep the dream of death by enemies.<sup>1</sup> The lion murmured songs of its roar-

<sup>1</sup> Migne has *ab hostibus somnum mortis incurrebat*, 'met through enemies the sleep of death.' A. is to the same effect.

ing in the ears of its offspring, and by a wonderful  
370 natural magic aroused in them the spark of life. The she-bear gave birth through the openings of its nostrils to an ill-formed progeny; but by licking and shaping them again and again with its long, pointed tongue brought them to a better figure. The wolf  
375 lurked in hiding, assuming the employment of the thief, and deserving of eminence on the airy walk of the gallows. The panther roamed through the woods in more open robbery, and preyed on a flock of sheep, not only for their coats, but also for their very bodies.  
380 The tiger did violence to the republic of grazing citizens with frequent shedding of innocent blood. The wild ass threw aside the captivity of the domestic ass, and, emancipated by Nature's command, inhabited bold mountains. There the wild boar, by its  
385 murderous weapon of a tusk, sold its death to the dogs for many an injury. The dog rent the winds with unsubstantial wounds, and bit the air with impatient tooth. The stag and doe, light in fleetness of foot, gained life by their running, and cheated the  
390 wicked jaws of pursuing dogs. The he-goat, clothed in false wool, seemed to disgust the nostrils with a four days' stench. The ram, robed in a nobler tunic, rejoiced in a plurality of wives, and beguiled the honor of marriage. The little fox cast off the dulness of  
395 the brute creation, and strove for the finer sagacity of man. The hare, seized with melancholy dread, not in sleep, but in the stupor of fear, dreamed, terrified, of the approach of dogs. The rabbit, which tempers the wrath of our cold climate by its pelt, fought off  
400 the attacks of our hunger with its own flesh. The ermine, scorning to be wedded to a more humble garment, laughed or wept in a splendid marriage with lustrous color. The beaver, lest it should suffer di-

vision of its very body by an enemy, cut off its end parts. The lynx rejoiced in such clearness of eyesight <sup>405</sup> that, compared with it, the other animals seemed blear-eyed. The marten and the sable, by the elegance of their fur, brought the half-completed beauty of the coverings of the other animals, when it asked for supplements, to the full. This representation of act-<sup>410</sup>ing form presented these animal figures, as feasts of pleasure, to the eyes of beholders.<sup>1</sup>

Now what imagination slumbered in the many pictures on the shoes and the undergarment, and in the lower, concealed clothing, I did not establish with any <sup>415</sup> certainty. But yet, as the assistance of some frail probabilities suggested, I think that there laughed there the delight of a picture of the natures of herbs and trees. For there trees were now clothed with purple tunics, now fringed with verdant foliage; now they <sup>420</sup> gave birth to the sweet-scented infancy of flowers, now matured into a goodlier fruit. But inasmuch as I knew of this series of pictures by hazardous thought and probability alone, and not by the faith of certainty, I pass it by, buried in the peace of silence. <sup>425</sup> But the shoes, which had taken their material from soft leather, followed so closely the forms of her feet that they seemed to have been born on them, or, so to speak, marvelously inscribed on them. On these, which scarcely ever fell away from their true quality, <sup>430</sup> there flourished, in the imagination of a picture, delicate flowers.

<sup>1</sup> Reading *videntium*, with B.

## METRE II.

*Illic forma rosea.*

There the form of the rose, faithfully painted, a  
erring very little from true appearance, matched the  
color of purple with its own blush, and had tinged  
the ground with its blood. There, playing with  
companion blossoms, was the lovely, fragrant flower  
of Adonis. The tall lily's silver proclaimed the fief  
and the valley-depths. The thyme, contentious with  
unequal lip, and jealous of the other blooms, vied with  
its companion flower, narcissus, and the merry river  
laughed with quiet murmurs. The light of all shone  
the columbine, of luxuriant aspect. The tiny bloom  
of the violet, speaking of the ease of the spring-time,  
starred the arbute trees, its face full of the beauty  
of art. Here she had ordered a variety of flower to lie  
which<sup>1</sup> was a writing-surface of royal name, thou-  
yet ignorant of the thumb of the writer. These were  
the riches of the spring and its mantles, the beauties  
of the earth and its stars, which the art of the paint-  
ers showed, representing the blossoms with deceiv-  
ing skill. With these blooming garments of flowers do  
the graciousness of the spendthrift spring enoble the  
meadows, some showing pure white, others purple,  
being woven by the skilful right hand of Favonius.

## PROSE II.

*Hæc vestium ornamenta, quamvis plenis suæ  
splendiditatis flammarent ardoribus.*

Although these decorations of the garments flamed  
with the glow of their own full splendor, yet they

<sup>1</sup> Reading *quaæ*, with B. and Migne.

lustre suffered eclipse by the star of the virgin's beauty. The virgin, furthermore, on tiles, with the aid of a reed pen, called up and pictured various images of things. Still the pictures would not keep closely to the material beneath them, but quickly vanished and died away, leaving no traces. Although she often quickened them and caused them to live, yet they could not endure in the plan of her composition. Now the virgin, as before said, came forth from the bounds of the celestial region, and was borne in her shining chariot toward the lowly dwelling of the suffering world. She was drawn by the birds of Juno herself, which were not disciplined in the service of the yoke, but were united by their own willingness. And a man who towered above the head of the virgin and the chariot, and whose countenance breathed not the commonness of earth, but rather the mystery of godship, aided the weakness of the womanly nature, and guided the approach of the chariot in a well-regulated course. While I was collecting my rays of sight—the maniples, as it were, of my eyes—to contemplate the height of this beauty, they, not daring to meet such grace and majesty, and weakened by the blows of splendor, fled, very fearful, to the tents of the eyelids. At the virgin's coming you would have thought that all the elements were keeping solemn festival, renewing, so to speak, their own natures. The firmament ordered its stars to shine more brightly than their wont, and lit the virgin's path, as it were, with its candles. And because of this the light of day itself was seen to wonder at their great boldness, since it saw them appear almost insolently in its presence. Phœbus, too, assuming a countenance gladder than usual, disclosed and poured out on the approach of the virgin all the riches of his light. To

his sister, also, whom he had deprived of the ornaments of his splendor, he returned the garment of  
• delight, and ordered her to meet the coming queen. The air put away the tearful visage of clouds, and with the favor of a clear face smiled upon the maiden's approach. Tossed at first in the madness of the north wind's anger, now it rested pleasantly in the lap of  
• Favonius. Birds, through some natural inspiration, sported with delightful play of wings, and gave the virgin show of veneration. Juno, who but a little while before had scorned the embraces of Jove, was so carried away with joy that, with many a laughing  
• glance of her eyes, she allured her husband to the delights of love. The sea, until then torn in tumultuous floods, now observed the coming of the virgin with solemn ceremony, and promised the perpetual peace of rest; for Æolus, that his winds and tempests  
• ss in her presence should no longer<sup>1</sup> raise civil wars, bound them in his cells. Fish swam out into the upper waters, in so far as the inactivity of their sensual existence permitted, and with joy and delight knew in advance the coming of their mistress. The  
• tis, celebrating her marriage with Nereus, purposed to conceive another Achilles. And maidens, whose beauty not only stole away the reason of man, but also made the celestials forget their godship, came forth from the places of streams, and, like bearers of  
• tribute, presented little gifts of aromatic nectar to the coming queen. When the virgin had graciously received these, she showed her love for the maidens by the encircling yoke of embraces, and by many a repeated kiss. The earth, lately stripped of its adornments by the thieving winter, through the generosity of spring donned a purple tunic of flowers, that it might

<sup>1</sup> Reading *amplius*, with Migne.

not, inglorious in ragged vestments, appear to the young virgin unbecomingly. And the spring, like an artisan skilled in weaving, in order the more happily to welcome her approach, wove garments for the trees. These lowered their leaves, and with a sort of bowed veneration, as if they were bending their knees, offered her their prayers. Out of them came maidens who enriched the treasures of the actual day by the day of their beauty, and bore in cedar vessels spices prepared from the kinds of herbs that they represent; and, as if paying their tribute to the young virgin, bought her favor with their gifts. Nymphs of the dell filled their laps with flowers, and now reddened the royal chariot with blushing blossoms, now made it lily-like with white flower-leaves. Flora generously presented the virgin with an undergarment of fine linen, which she had worked for her husband, that she might merit his embraces. Proserpine, loathing the couch of her Tartarean spouse, and returning to her native upper world, was unwilling to be denied the presence of her mistress. And the animals of the earth, taught by some natural instinct, on learning of the virgin's approach sported with glad gaiety. So was the sum of all things eager in attention to her, and with wonderful rivalry strove to gain her favor.

## METRE III.

*Floriger horrentem Zephyrus laxaverat annum.*

Flower-bearing Zephyrus had softened the rugged year, and quelled the wars of Boreas with its peace, and, bathed in a hail of flowers, rained privet-bloom, and ordered the blossoming snows to be in the meadows. The spring, like a lively fuller, refreshed the garments

of the fields, and with the fire of its purple kindled  
the dresses of the flowers. It gave back foliage to  
the trees which the winter had shorn, thus restoring  
that vesture which the other had formerly taken away.  
 •• It was the season in which, to the applause of Dryads,  
the abundant favor of the spring spreads out its treas-  
ures in its fields; in which, while the hardier strength  
is present, the infancy of flowers rises higher, and  
draws away from its mother earth; in which the  
 •• mirror of the violet<sup>1</sup> clings to its earthy cradle, and,  
with fresh countenance, asks for the breath of the air.  
It was the season in which the earth, her head starred  
with roses, with full constellation rivals the sky; in  
which the almond-tree flies its banners and proclaims  
 •• the beginning of summer, and with its bloom calls out  
the joys of spring; in which the budded vine embr.aces  
its elm's wedded bosom, and thinks on its giving birth.  
The candle of the sun banished<sup>2</sup> winter's shade, forcing  
all cold to suffer exile. Still there lurked withdrawn  
 •• in many woods an illusory winter, which the new-  
born shadiness of the forest had made with leaves.  
Now to her flower-child Juno gave the breasts of dew  
with which this nourisher first suckles her offspring.  
It was the season in which the strength of Phœbus  
 •• awakens the dead grasses, commanding all to rise  
from their burial-mounds; in which the joyful aspect  
of spring makes calm the world, and wipes away the  
tears of winter from its face, so that a flower may  
 •• commit itself to the good faith of the air, and wintry  
cold blast not the first blossom; in which Phœbus  
visits the earth, groaning with the sluggishness of  
winter, and greets it with joyful light; in which the  
latest period of time puts away age, and the old world  
begins to be a boy; in which Phœbus spoils night

<sup>1</sup> Lat. *violetæ speculum*.

<sup>2</sup> Reading *proscriptis*, with B.

of its proper hours, and the pygmy day commences to become a giant; in which the Phrixean herd rejoices in its friend the sun, pays its tribute, and makes ready a welcome for Phœbus; in which the nightingale, singing a song with a tongue of honeyed music, celebrates the festival of its own spring-time, in jubilee for which it so strikes the lyre of its throat that with its own mouth it proclaims a very god; in which the lark with sweet sound counterfeits the cithara, flies to the gods above, and talks with Jove. A silver splendor clothed the wanton streams, and had ordered its day-light to be on the rivers. One could see the garrulous flow of a changing fountain, the murmur of the running of which was a prologue to sleep. By the glory of its appearance the fountain itself asked that tired man take draughts of it.

ss

## PROSE III.

*Hac igitur amoenantis temporis juventute.*

But the virgin was not gladdened by the acclamations of any of these things in the freshness of this pleasant season, and could not moderate her former grief. Lowering the chariot to the ground, she came toward me with modest approach, beautifying the earth with her footsteps. After I had looked on her a time, not far distant from me, I fell on my face, prostrated by stupor of mind and all buried in the delirium of ecstasy, and the powers of my senses imprisoned; and, neither in life nor in death, I struggled between the two. She, kindly raising me, strengthened my dizzy steps with the comfort of her supporting hands, and, encircling me in her embrace and sweetening my lips with modest kisses, made me well, who

25 was weak and sick with stupor, by the honey-flowing balm of her speech. When she saw that I had returned to myself, she depicted for my mental perception the image of a real voice, and by this brought into actual being words which had been, so to speak, archetypes ideally preconceived.

‘Alas!’ said she, ‘what blindness of ignorance, what delirium of mind, what failing of the senses, what infirmity of the reason has placed a cloud on thine understanding, has forced thy spirit into exile, 30 has dulled the power of thy feeling, has made thy mind to sicken, so that not only thine intellect is cheated out of its quick recognition of thy Nourisher, but that also thy power of discerning, as it were smitten by a strange and monstrous sight, suffers a collapse at my very appearance? Why has recognition of my face strayed from thy memory? Thou, in whom my gifts bespeak me, who have blessed thee with such abundant favor and kindness; who, from thine early age, as vicegerent of God the Creator, 35 have ordered by sure management thy life’s proper course; who in time past brought the fluctuating material of thy body out from the impure essence of primordial matter into true being; who pitied thy misshapen countenance, which, so to speak, cried often to me, and marked it with the stamp of human appearance, and ennobled it, destitute before of beauty and grace of lineament, with the more excellent vesture of features. And here, arranging the different offices of the members for the protection of 40 the body, I ordered the senses, as guards of the corporeal realm, to keep watch, that like spies on foreign enemies they might defend the body from external assault. So would the material part of the whole body, being adorned with the higher glories of nature,

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be united the more agreeably when it came to marriage with its spouse the spirit; and so would not the spouse, in disgust at the baseness of its mate, oppose the marriage. Thy spirit, also, I have stamped with vital powers, that it might not, poorer than the body, envy its successes. And in it I have established a power of native strength, which is a hunter of subtle matters in the pursuit of knowledge, and establishes them, rendered intelligible, in the understanding. On it, also, I have impressed the seal of reason, to set aside by the winnowing fan of its discrimination the emptiness of falsehood from the serious matters of truth. Through me, also, the power of memory serves thee, hoarding in the treasure-chest of its recollection the glorious wealth of knowledge. With these gifts, then, I have blessed both, that neither might groan over its own poverty, or complain at the other's affluence.

And just as this marriage is brought to pass by my consent, so is the same marital bond dissolved according to my decision. Not in thee particularly, but also in all things universally, shines out the abundance of my power. I am she who have fashioned the form and eminence of man into the likeness of the original mundane mechanism, that in him, as in a mirror of the world itself, combined nature may appear. For just as, of the four elements, the concordant discord, the single plurality, the dissonant consonance, the dissenting agreement, produce the structures of the palace of earth, so, of four ingredients, the similar unsimilarity, the unequal equality, the unformed conformity, the separate identity, firmly erect the building of the human body. And those qualities which come together as mediators among the elements —these establish a firm peace among the four humors.

¶ And just as the army of the planets opposes with contrary motion the fixed rolling of the firmament, so in man is found a continual hostility between lust and reason.) For the activity of reason, taking its rise from a celestial source, passes through the low levels of earth, and, watchful of heavenly things, turns again to heaven. The activities of lust, on the other hand, wandering waywardly and contrary to the firmament of reason, turn and slip down into the decline of things of earth. Now the latter, lust, leads the human mind into the ruin of vices, so that it perishes; the former, reason, bids it, as it rises, to ascend to the serenity of virtue. The one dishonors man, and changes him to a beast; the other mightily transfigures him into a god. Reason illuminates the darkness of the brain by the light of contemplation; lust extinguishes the radiance of the mind by the night of desire. Reason makes man to talk with angels; lust forces him to wanton with brutes. Reason teaches man to find in exile a home; lust forces him in his home to be an exile. And, in this, man's nature cannot reproach me for my ordering and management. For, out of the council of wisdom, I have set such a war of opposition between these antagonists that if, in this strife, reason bend down lust to defeat, the victory will not be without its following reward. For prizes won by victories shine more fairly than other presents. Gifts acquired by labor are brighter and more delightful than all those that are free. And he deserves the commendation of greater praise who toils and receives little, than he who receives much at ease. The earlier labor, pouring a certain sweetness into the following recompense, rewards the worker with greater favor.

In these then, and in the greater gifts of nature, the

universe finds its qualities in man. Hear how in this <sup>220</sup> universe, as in a great city, order is established by the control of a majestic government. In the heavens, — as in the citadel of a human city, resides imperially the everlasting Ruler. From Him eternally has gone forth the command that every individual thing should <sup>225</sup> be known and written in the book of His providence. In the air, as in the middle of the city, the heavenly army of angels does service, and with delegated control diligently extends its guard over man. Man, like one foreign-born, dwelling in a suburb of the <sup>230</sup> universe, does not refuse obedience to the angelic host. In this state, then, God is commanding, the angel administering, man serving. God by command creates man; the angel by work procreates him; man by obedience recreates himself. (God by decree deter- <sup>235</sup> mines a thing; the angel by action fashions it; man submits himself to the will of the controlling spirit.) God commands with the mastery of authority; the angel administers with the service of action; man obeys with the mystery of regeneration. But the <sup>240</sup> present line of our thought has gone too far astray, which<sup>1</sup> would venture to raise the theme to the ineffable mystery of Godship, in the effort to grasp which the breath of our mind faints. Now a likeness to this most excellently ordered state arises in man. <sup>245</sup> In the citadel of the head rests wisdom, who commands; to whom, as to a goddess, the other powers, as demi-goddesses, do obeisance. For her, inborn understanding and ability in logic, as well as the faculty to recall the past, which dwell in different <sup>250</sup> rooms of the head, are eager to do service. In the heart, as in the midst of the human city, magnanimity has established her dwelling-place, and, acknowledging

<sup>1</sup> Reading *qua*, with Migne.

her service under the dominion of wisdom, works  
as that authority determines. The loins, like outlying  
districts, give over the extreme parts of the body to  
passionate pleasures. These, not daring to oppose  
the direction of magnanimity, serve her will. In this  
realm, then, wisdom assumes the place of commander,  
magnanimity the likeness of the administrator, passion  
acquires the appearance of the servant. In other parts,  
also, of the human body is shown the likeness of the  
universe. For just as in the universe the boon of  
the sun's heat heals things which are sick, so in man  
a heat which proceeds from the depths of the heart  
enlivens and freshens the members of the human body.  
And just as the moon in the workings of the universe  
is the mother of many humors, so in man the liver  
imparts a humor to his members. And just as the  
moon, when deprived of the light of the sun, pales,  
so the strength of the liver becomes inactive when  
widowed from the enlivening comfort of the heart.  
And just as in the absence of the sun the air is clothed  
in darkness, so without the aid of the heart the vital  
power pants in vain. In addition to these, see how  
the universe changes its appearance with the various  
successions of seasons—how now it rejoices in the  
boyhood of spring, now advances in the youth of  
summer, now matures in the manhood of autumn,  
now whitens in the old age of winter. Like change  
of season, and the same variety, alter the age of man.  
For when the dawn of age arises in human nature,  
there begins man's early spring. When the chariot of  
life has gained the farther turning-posts, man basks in  
the summer of youth. But when longer existence shall  
have completed the ninth hour of age, so to speak,  
he passes beyond into the autumn of manhood. And  
when the day of his age sinks towards the west, as

decay now announces the evening of life, the wintry frost of old age makes him grow white with its rime. 190

In all these things resounds unspeakably the working of my power. Yet I have determined to cover the face of my might in very many ways, preserving its mystery from commonness, for fear lest, if I should impart to man a close knowledge of myself, those 195 matters, which at first are prized among men because unknown, would afterward, when known,<sup>1</sup> be held of little worth. For, as the common proverb witnesses, the familiar communication of a thing is the mother of contempt. The trump of Aristotelian authority 200 declares that he lessens the majesty of mysteries who divulges secrets to the unworthy. But lest I should seem, in this my prerogative and power, to be detracting arrogantly from God, I profess most emphatically that I am the lowly disciple of the Supreme 205 Ruler. For I, as I work, am not able to press my step in the footprints of God as He works, but I contemplate Him in His activity from a long way off, as it were with longing. His operation is simple, mine is multiform; His work is faultless, mine is defective; 210 His is marvelous, mine is transient; He is incapable of being born, I was born; He is the maker, I am the made; He is the Creator of my work, I am the work of the Creator; He works from nothing, I beg work from another; He works by His own divine 215 will, I work under His name. By His nod alone He orders a thing to exist; but my activity is the mark of the divine activity, and, compared with the divine power, thou canst see that my power is impotent. So mayest thou perceive that my achievement is defective, and consider that my strength is of trifling degree. Take counsel from the author of theological

<sup>1</sup> Reading *nota*, with B. and Migne.

riches, to whose trustworthiness, rather than to my strong opinion, thou oughtest to give assent. For, according to his sure testimony, man by my working is born, by the might of God is born again. Through me he is called from not being into being; through Him he is led from being on into a better being. For through me man is begotten unto death, through Him he is created unto life again. But the mystery of my profession is disregarded by the mystery of this second birth, for such a birth does not need such a midwife; but rather am I, Nature, ignorant of the nature of this birth, and in the effort to comprehend these matters the keenness of my intellect grows dull, the light of my reason is blurred. For the understanding is amazed at the things not understood, the perception is confused by the things to be perceived; and since here all theory of natural objects fails, let us revere the mystery of so great a thing by the strength of faith alone. And it is not strange if here theology does not extend me her friendship, since in many matters we are conscious, not of enmities, but of diversities. I attain faith by reason, she attains reason by faith. I know in order that I may believe, she believes in order that she may know. I assent by perceiving and knowing, she perceives by assenting. I barely see the things that are visible, she comprehends in their reflection things incomprehensible. I by my intellect hardly compass trifles, she in her comprehension compasses immensities. I, almost like a beast, walk the earth, she serves in secret heaven. Now, although it is not part of my office to treat of what has been said, yet I have allowed my discourse to stray thither, that thou mightest not doubt that, compared with the superlative might of God, my power is exceedingly small.

But although my activity is deficient when compared with the divine power, nevertheless it exceeds human power, when balanced with it, greatly. And therefore, in a comparison of three steps, we can find three grades of power; so that the power of God may be called the superlative, that of Nature the comparative, that of man the positive. All this discourse gives thee, and without any questioning doubt, <sup>26</sup> a close knowledge of me. And—to speak more intimately—I am Nature, who have sought after thee for my presence with the gift of my esteem, and thought thee worthy to bless with my conversation.

When Nature unveiled to me through these words <sup>27</sup> the face of her being, and by her reminder, as by a key, unlocked ahead for me the door to her acquaintance, the little cloud of stupor, which had lain close on my mind, lifted.<sup>1</sup> And by this reminder, as by some medicinal potion, the sick stomach, so to speak, <sup>28</sup> of my mind cast out all the remnants of its illusion. Then, restored anew to myself from my mind's wandering, I fell headlong at the feet of Nature, and, in the place of a salutation, marked them with pressure of many a kiss. Then, rising and composing myself, <sup>29</sup> I presented her in speech, with a reverent bowing of the head as to divine majesty, the offering of a salutation. Fittingly I fled to the retreat of excuse, and with prayers made from the honey of humility I entreated her kindness not to assign the fact that I had <sup>30</sup> paid her coming no joyous greeting to the fault of heedlessness, nor to impute it to arrogant displeasure, nor to ascribe it to the venoms of ingratitude. But rather at her appearance I had been stupefied in the false death of ecstasy, as it were struck dumb at the <sup>31</sup> strange presence of a marvelous apparition; and I

<sup>1</sup> Reading *evaporavit*, with A.

said that it was not to be wondered at if before such divinity the countenance of mortality in me paled, if in the noon of such majesty the small beam of my <sup>295</sup> perception went out into the twilight of error, if at the appearing of such bliss my poor wretchedness was ashamed. For the dark obscurity of the ignorance of weak humanity, and its impotent dumbness of amazement, and its frequent fits of stupor, are allied by a <sup>300</sup> certain bond of brotherhood, inasmuch as, from the close association, frail human nature is always wont, like a pupil disciplined by a teacher instructing him and informing him of the laws of his race, both to be darkened by ignorance at the first sight of new <sup>305</sup> subjects and in the attention to great principles, and to be smitten with stupor and to be overcome with amazement. While this manner of excuse was gaining for me the kindly hearing of the queen, and was earning her favor the more agreeably, and besides <sup>310</sup> was giving me the confidence that I should hear greater things, I laid before her consideration a certain unsettled doubt of mine, which was disturbing the welcome in my mind with extreme and pressing restlessness, and I proceeded in these words of inquiry:

## METRE IV.

*O Dei proles, genetrixque rerum.*

'O offspring of God, mother of all things, bond and firm chain of the universe, jewel of earth, mirror to mortality, light-bringer of the world! Peace, love, virtue, government, power, order, law, end, way, light, <sup>5</sup> source, life, glory, splendor, beauty, form, pattern of the world! Thou who, guiding the universe with thy reins, dost join all things in firmness with the

knot of concord, and dost with the bond of peace  
marry heaven to earth ; who, reflecting upon the simple  
ideas of mind, dost fashion every species of thing, ••  
and, cloaking matter with form, dost shape the cloak  
of form with thy finger ; whom the heavens befriend,  
whom the air serves, whom the earth cherishes, whom  
the wave worships, to whom, as to the mistress of  
the universe, each thing pays its tribute ; who, link- ••  
ing day to night by interchange, dost grant the  
candle of the sun to day, and puttest to sleep  
the clouds of night with the shining mirror of the  
moon ; who inlayest the heavens with the gold of  
manifold stars, making bright the seat of our upper ••  
air, and filling the sky with the gems of the constel-  
lations and with divers soldiery ; who changest the  
face of the heavens, and variest its appearance, and  
grantest life and population to our airy region, bind-  
ing it together with law ; at whose nod the world ••  
grows young, the forest is curled with leafy locks,  
and, clothed in its tunic of blossoms, the earth exults ;  
who dost repress and increase the threatening sea,  
cutting short the course of the fury of the deep, lest  
the seething of the flood should prevail to bury the ••  
region of earth ! Disclose the reason to me, who  
desire it, why thou, a stranger from the skies, seekest  
the earth, why thou offerest to our world the gifts  
of thy deity, why thy features are bedewed with a  
shower of weeping, what the tears on thy countenance ••  
foretell ? Weeping is a sufficient and faithful tongue  
of inner grief.'

## PROSE IV.

*Præfata igitur virgo hujus quæstionis solutionem  
in vestibulo excubare demonstrans.*

Then the virgin, showing that the answer to this question lay watchful on its threshold, said:

'Can it be that thou dost not know that the transgression of the earthly sphere, that the disorder in the ordering of the world, that the carelessness of government, that the unjustness of law, have forced me to descend from the innermost sanctuaries of heavenly mystery to the common brothels of earth? If thou wert willing to gather up in the loving sympathy of thy mind and to treasure in the closet of thy heart that which I would say, I would unfold the labyrinth of thy perplexity.'

To these words I returned, with strict restraint of my voice, a fitting reply.

" 'For nothing,' said I, 'O heavenly queen, do I hunger with a more eager desire than the explanation of this question.'

Then said she:

'Since all things are by the law of their being held subject to my laws, and ought to pay to me a rightful and established tribute, almost all, with just dues and with seemly presentation, regularly obey my commands; but from this general rule man alone is excluded by an abnormal exception. He, stripped of the cloak of decency, and prostituted in the shameless brothel of unchastity, dares to stir tumult and strife not only against the majesty of his queen, but also to inflame the madness of intestine war against his mother. Other creations, on which I have bestowed the lesser gifts of my favor, throughout the rank c

their activities are bound in willing subjection to the inviolability of my commands. But man, who exhausted the treasury of almost all my riches, tries to overthrow the natural impulses of nature, and arms against me the violence of wicked lust. Consider, how almost all things, according to the proclamation of my command, perform, reasonably as their native character demands, the fixed duties of my law. The firmament, according to my principle and teaching, leads all things not in vain in daily circuit, and with identity of turning advances its course, and retreats from whither it has advanced. The stars, as they shine for the glory of the firmament itself, and clothe it with their splendors, and complete the short day of their journey, and compass the celestial space with their various orbits, serve my majesty. The planets, according to the going forth of my command and order, restrain the rapid motion of the firmament, going to their rising with contrary steps, and afterward repairing to the place of their setting. Thus, too, the air, disciplined under my instruction, now rejoices with a kindly breeze, now weeps in the tears of the clouds as if in sympathy, now is angered by the raging of the winds,<sup>1</sup> now is shaken by the threatening rumble of thunder, now is parched in the furnace of heat, now is sharpened with the severity of cold. The birds, which have been fashioned in various forms under my supervision and ordering, marvel greatly at my teachings, as they cross the floods of air on the oarage of their wings. Because of my intervening mediation, the sea is joined closely to the earth by the firm bonds of friendship, and does not dare to violate its solemn obligations of

<sup>1</sup> Migne has also *nunc coruscationibus illuminatur*, 'now flashes with lightning.'

faith sworn with its sister, and fears to stray further  
6 into the habitations of earth than the limit established  
for its wandering. At my mere<sup>1</sup> will and wish it is  
now vexed into the wrath of the storm, now returns  
to the peace of tranquillity, now, borne aloft by its  
swelling pride, rises to the likeness of a mountain,  
7 now is leveled out into a smooth plain. The fish,  
bound to their vow of my acknowledgment, fear  
greatly to detract from my rules and canons. By  
my order and edict, the rains are married to the earth  
in a kind of imperial embrace. They, laboring with  
8 untiring production at the creation of progeny, cease  
not to be parents of the various species of things.  
The terrestrial animals beneath my examination and  
management do not profess activities at variance with  
the sovereignty which is over their obedience. The  
9 earth now whitens with the hoariness of frosts, now  
is fringed with flowery vegetation. The forest now  
has grown its leafy hair, now is shorn by the sharp  
razor of winter. Winter holds the buried seeds deep  
in the lap of mother earth, spring sets the captives  
10 free, summer ripens the harvests, autumn displays  
her riches. But why should I permit the course of  
my narration to stray to instances? Man alone rejects  
the music of my harp, and raves under the lyre of  
frenzied Orpheus. For the human race, derogate from  
11 its high birth, commits monstrous acts in its union  
of genders, and perverts the rules of love by a prac-  
tice of extreme and abnormal irregularity. Thus, too,  
man, become the tyro of a distorted passion, turns  
the predicate into direct contraposition, against all  
12 rules. Drawing away from power to spell of love  
aright, he is proved an unlettered sophist. He avoids  
the fitting relation of the Dionean art, and falls to

<sup>1</sup> Reading *tantum*, with Migne.

vicious perversion. And while he subverts me with such pursuit, he also in his frenzy plots execution against me. I grieve that I have widely adorned men's natures with so many privileges and beauties, for they abuse and bring the honor of honor to disgrace, deform the fairness of the body with the ugliness of lust, mar the color of beauty with lurid paint —the hue of adulterous desire—and even, as they blossom into vices, deflower the bloom of Flora. Why did I deify the countenance of Helen with divine grace, who forced the use of her beauty awry into the abuse of harlotry, breaking her faith with her royal couch, and binding herself in marriage with Paris? Pasiphaë, also, driven by the madness of inordinate lust, in the form of a cow corruptly celebrated her bestial nuptials with a brute animal, and, concluding with a viler error, ended by the miscreated enormity of the bullock. Myrrha, roused by the stings of myrrh-breathing Venus, and fallen from the affection of a daughter to a lust for her father, filled and renewed with her father the office of her mother. Medea, cruelly treating her own son in order that she might erect the inglorious work of love, destroyed love's small and glorious work. Narcissus, when his shadow falsely told of another Narcissus, was filled with dreamy thoughts, and, believing his very self to be another, ran to the danger of passion for himself. And many other youths, clothed by my favor with noble beauty, who have been crazed with love of coin, have turned their hammers of love to the office of anvils. Such a great body of foul men roam and riot along the breadth of the whole earth, by whose seducing contact chastity herself is poisoned. Of such of these men as profess the grammar of love, some embrace only the masculine gender, some the feminine, others

the common or indiscriminate. Some, as of heteroclitic gender, are declined irregularly, through the winter  
135 in the feminine, through the summer in the masculine. Some, in the pursuit of the logic of love, establish  
in their conclusions the law of subject and the law  
of predicate in proper relation. Some, who have the  
place of the subject, have not learned how to form  
140 a predicate. Some only predicate, and will not await  
the proper addition of the subject's end. Others,  
scorning to enter into the court of Dione, devise a  
miserable sport below its vestibule. Against all these  
justice makes her complaint, the law is armed, and  
145 together they strive to avenge their wrongs with the  
sword of retribution. Thou wilt not marvel, then, if  
I depart into these strange, unholy words, since un-  
holy men dare to practice licentiousness. For I throw  
them forth indignantly, to the end that virtuous men  
150 may respect the character of chastity, and that the  
shameless may be restrained from the lewd practices  
of lust. Indeed, a knowledge of evil is expedient for  
security, for it punishes the guilty, branding them with  
the mark of shamelessness, and fortifies those who  
155 are without the armor of caution. Now my explana-  
tion has filed away and erased the worry of thy  
doubt. For these reasons, then, did I pass from the  
secret places of the heaven's court above, and descend  
to the lowlands of this mortal earth, that I might,  
160 with thee as with my friend and confidant, lay down  
my sad burden of the accursed vices of men, and  
with thee determine what answering punishment  
should be given to such rebellion in crime, in order  
that the sting of the punishment might be made as  
165 great as the scourge of those crimes, and might equal  
them in retribution.'

Then said I:



'O thou who directest all things, did I not fear to provoke loathing in thy kindness by the number of my questions, I would expose to the light of <sup>270</sup> thine understanding the shadows of another doubt of mine.'

'Nay, rather,' she answered, 'do thou impart to our hearing all thy questions, not only those of recent birth but also those aged in the rust of years, that <sup>275</sup> the agitatiton of thy doubts may be quieted by the sure strength of our explanations.'

Then said I:

'I marvel as I think of the compositions of the poets, why thou armest the points of these invectives <sup>280</sup> solely against the faults of human kind, while we also read that the Gods limped with the same steps of transgression. For Jupiter, who carried away the Phrygian boy to the upper world, bore for him there a proportionate desire; and while he appointed him <sup>285</sup> the charge of bearing him the cup at his table during the day, he made him his bedfellow on the couch at night. And Bacchus and Apollo, co-heirs of the paternal lewdness, turned to women, not in the power of godlike strength, but by the trick of superstitious <sup>290</sup> love, feigning to be boys.'

Then she, her first calm look much disquieted, said :

'What! in thine asking dost thou clothe in the likeness of a doubt a question which is not worthy to <sup>295</sup> take the form of a doubt? Dost thou attempt to give faith to the dreamy fancies of the poets, which the activity of poetical art has portrayed? Does not philosophy's saner treatment file away and erase with higher understanding that which is learned in the <sup>300</sup> child's cradle of poetic teaching? Can it be that thou dost not know how poets expose naked falsehood to

their hearers with no protecting cloak, that they may intoxicate their ears, and, so to speak, bewitch them  
at 205 with a melody of honeyed delight; or how they cloak that same falsehood with a pretense of credibility, that, by means of images of objective things, they may mold the souls of men on the anvil of dishonorable assent; or that in the shallow exterior of literature  
at 210 the poetic lyre sounds a false note, but within speaks to its hearers of the mystery of loftier understanding, so that, the waste of outer falsity cast aside, the reader finds, in secret within, the sweeter kernel of truth? Sometimes poets combine historical events  
at 215 and imaginative fancies, as it were in a splendid structure, to the end that from the harmonious joining of diversities a finer picture of the story may result. But yet, when the great body of the gods is spoken of by the poets idly and vainly, or the very deities  
at 220 are said to have stealthily withdrawn their hands from the chastening rods of Venus, there dawns the shadow of untruth, nor in such matter is the poet found varying from his peculiar quality. For surely, when the dreams of Epicurus are put to sleep, the madness  
at 225 of Manichæus cured, the intricacies of Aristotle argued out, the fallacies of Arius refuted, reason then proves the sole unity of God, the universe declares it, faith believes it, Scripture attests it. In Him is no spot found, Him no evil fault attacks, with Him no  
at 230 tempting passion abides. Here is splendor never failing, life untiring and immortal, a fountain always springing, a fruitful conservatory of being, the great source of wisdom, the primal origin of goodness. Then what of it if many, as in the case of the poets,  
at 235 have distorted the ultimate categories of love for purposes of literature? The view either that there are gods, or that they wanton at the sports of

love, is false,<sup>1</sup> and darkens to depths of extreme falsehood. Over that I have drawn the cloud, of silence, but the other I have unfolded in the light of <sup>240</sup> a true explanation.'

At this I said:

'Now I see, mother, that my question savors of a most childlike ignorance. Still, if another very small inquiry, which promises at least a certain worth, may <sup>245</sup> dare to appear in thy hearing for consideration, my wish would be to question thee of a certain matter, not merely in query but in lament.'

To these words she replied:

'Have I not before this extended to thee free reins <sup>250</sup> to ask without any hindrance or restraint by me?'

'I marvel,' then I said, 'wherefore certain parts of thy tunic, which should be like the connection of marriage, suffer division in that part of their texture where the fancies of art give the image of man.' <sup>255</sup>

'Now from what we have touched on previously,' she answered, 'thou canst deduce what the figured gap and rent mystically show. For since, as we have said before, many men have taken arms against their mother in evil and violence, they thereupon, in fixing <sup>260</sup> between them and her a vast gulf of dissension, lay on me the hands of outrage, and themselves tear apart my garments piece by piece, and, as far as in them lies, force me, stripped of dress, whom they ought to clothe with reverential honor, to come to shame <sup>265</sup> like a harlot. This tunic, then, is made with this rent, since by the unlawful assaults of man alone the garments of my modesty suffer disgrace and division.'

Then said I:

'Now the stream of my doubts is calmed by the

<sup>1</sup> Omitting *que*, with Migne.

light of thine explanations, and grants my mind a rest from disquiet. But should it commend itself to thy favor, I would eagerly strive to learn what irrational  
275 reason, what indiscreet discretion, what misguided affection, has so forced man's little spark of reason to slumber, that he, drunk with the Lethean cup of sensuality, not only has become an apostate from thy laws, but also unrighteously rebels against them.'

280 Then she answered:

'If thy wish is to learn the seeding and origin of this evil, thou shouldst rouse the flame of higher thought, and creep on to seek with a more eager desire for understanding. Let keenness expel the intellect's  
285 stupidity, let constancy of attention check flooding thoughts. For as I make my beginning in a loftier and nobler style, and desire to weave the line of my story, I do not wish as before to explain my principles on a dead level of words, nor yet to pollute unholy  
290 subjects with new profanities of speech, but rather to gild with the golden ornaments of chaste words matters of shame, and to deck them in the various colors of beautiful expression. For it is fitting to purple the dross of the aforesaid vices with glowing  
295 phrase, to perfume the foulness of evil with the odor of sweet words, in order that the stench of such great filth may not go abroad far upon the winds, and bring many to indignation and loathing disgust. Sometimes, no doubt, as we have touched on hitherto, since  
300 speech should be related to the matters of which we speak, deformity of expression ought to be molded to ugliness of subject. But in the coming theme, in order that evil words may not offend the readers' hearing, nor establish an abode in the mouth of a virgin,  
305 I wish to give to these monstrous vices a cloak of well-sounding phrases.'

'Now the hunger of my intellect,' I said, 'the sharpness of my burning desire, the ardor of my fervent spirit, the constancy of my heightened and firm attention, request the things which thou prom-<sup>310</sup> isest.'

Then said she:

'When God wished to bring the creation of His worldly palace out from the spiritual abode of His inner preconception into external mold, and to ex-<sup>315</sup> press, as in a material word and by its real existence, the mental word which He had conceived from the everlasting foundation of the universe, like a splendid world's architect, like a goldsmith working in gold, like the skilful artisan of a stupendous production,<sup>320</sup> like the industrious workman of a wonderful work, He fashioned the marvelous form of His earthly palace, not with the laborious assistance of an exterior agency, nor by the help of material lying there at hand, nor because of any base need, but by the power of His<sup>325</sup> sole independent will. Then God added to this worldly palace various kinds of things, and these, though separated by the strife of different natures, He governed with harmony of proper order, furnished with laws, and bound with ordinances. And thus He<sup>330</sup> united with mutual and fraternal kisses things antagonistic from the opposition of their properties, between which the space had made its room from contraries, and He changed the strife of hatred into the peace of friendship. All things, then, agreeing through in-<sup>335</sup> visible bonds of union, plurality returned to unity, diversity to identity, dissonance to harmony, discord to concord in peaceful agreement. But after the universal Maker had clothed all things with the forms for their natures, and had wedded them in marriage with pro-<sup>340</sup> portions suitable to them individually, then, wishing

that by the round of mutual relation of birth and death there should to perishable things be given stability through instability, infinity through impermanence, eternity through transiency, and that a series of things should be continually woven together in unbroken reciprocation of birth, He decreed that similar things, stamped with the seal of clear confirmity, be brought from their like along the lawful path of sure descent. Me, then, He appointed a sort of deputy, a coiner for stamping the orders of things, for the purpose that I should form their figures on the proper anvils, and should not let the shape vary from the shape of the anvil, and that through my activity and skill the face of the copy should not be changed by additions of any other elements from the face of the original. Accordingly, obeying the command of the Ruler, in my work I stamp, so to speak, the various coins<sup>1</sup> of things in the image of the original, exemplifying the figure of the example, harmoniously forming like from like, and have produced the distinctive appearances of individual things. Yet beneath the mysterious, divine majesty, I have so performed this work and service that the right hand of spiritual power should direct my hand in its application, since the pen of my composition would stray in sudden error, should it not be guided by the supreme Supporter. Without the help, however, of an assisting worker, I could not perfect so many classes of things. Therefore, since it pleased me to sojourn in the grateful palace of the eternal region, where no blast of wind destroys the peace of pure serenity, where no dropping night of clouds buries the untired day of open heaven, where no violence of tempest rages, where no rioter's madness impends in thunder, in the

<sup>1</sup> Reading *numismata*, with R.

outskirt world I stationed Venus, who is skilled in the knowledge of making, as under-deputy of my work, in order that she, under my judgment and guidance, and with the assisting activity of her husband Hymen and her son Cupid, by laboring at the various <sup>380</sup> formation of the living things of earth, and regularly applying their productive hammers to their anvils, might weave together the line of the human race in unwearied continuation, to the end that it should not suffer violent sundering at the hands of the Fates.' <sup>385</sup>

While, in the progress of this narrative, mention was being made of Cupid, I slipped a question of the following tenor into an interruption, with which I had broken in, saying:

'Stay! stay! Did I not fear to incur disfavor from <sup>390</sup> thy kindness by rude division of thy speech, and by the burden of my questions, I would desire to know, from thy discernment and by thy delineation, the nature of Cupid, on whom thy speech has touched before with some slight mention. For though various <sup>395</sup> authors have pictured his nature under the covering wrap of allegory, they have yet left us no marks of certainty. And his authority over the human race is seen from experience to be so powerful that no one, whether marked with the seal of nobility, or <sup>400</sup> clothed in the beauty of exceptional wisdom, or fortified with the armor of courage, or robed in the garment of loveliness, or honored with distinctions of other graces, can except himself from the comprehensiveness of the power of love.'

Then she, slowly shaking her head, said in words foretelling rebuke:

'I believe that thou art serving as a paid soldier in the camp of Cupid, and art connected with him by some relationship and close intimacy. For thou <sup>405</sup>

dost eagerly try to explore his tangled maze, though thou oughtest rather to be applying thy mind's attention the more closely to my discourse, rich in treasures of thought. But nevertheless, before it advances into the course of my further speech, since I sympathize with the weakness of thy humanity, I am obliged to dispel, as far as in my small ability lies, the shadows of thine ignorance. Besides, I am bound to the solving of thy problems by solemn obligation and promise. So, either through describing with faithful description, or defining with correct definition, a matter that is non-demonstrable I shall demonstrate, one that is inextricable I shall untangle, albeit this, which is not bound in obedience by connections with any substance, and does not desire the scrutiny of the intellect, cannot be stamped with mark or any description. Then let there be given this representation of the subject, as I have determined it, let this issue as the explanation of a nature inexplicable, let this be the conception of a subject unknown, this theory be given of a matter not ascertainable; and yet, withal, in chastened and lofty style:

## Metre V.

*Pax odio, fraudique fides, spes juncta timori.*

Love is peace joined with hatred, faith with fraud, hope with fear, and fury mixed with reason, pleasant shipwreck, light heaviness, welcome Charybdis, healthy sickness, satisfied<sup>1</sup> hunger, famished satiety, drunken thirst, deceptive delight, glad sorrow, joy full of pains, sweet evil, evil sweetness, pleasure bitter to itself, whose scent is savory, whose savor is taste-

<sup>1</sup> Reading *et satiata*, with Migne.

less, grateful tempest, clear night, shadowy day, living death, dying life, agreeable misfortune, sinful forgiveness, pardonable sin, laughable punishment, holy iniquity, nay, even delightful crime, unstable play, fixed delusion,<sup>1</sup> weak vigor, changeable firmness, mover of things established, undiscerning reason, mad prudence, sad prosperity, tearful laughter, sick repose, soothing hell, sorrowful paradise, pleasant prison, vernal winter, wintry spring, calamity, bold moth of the mind, which the purple of the king feels, and which does not pass by the toga of a beggar. Does not Cupid, working many miracles by changing things into their opposites, transform the whole race of men? When the monk and the adulterer have both been foreign to a man, he yet compels these<sup>2</sup> two to possess and dwell in him at the same time. While his madness rages, Scylla lays aside her fury, the good Æneas begins to be a Nero, Paris lightens with his sword, Tydeus is gentle in love, Nestor becomes young and Melicerta old, Thersites begs Paris for his beauty, Davus begs Adonis and into Davus goes all of Adonis, rich Crassus is in want and Codrus has abundance in poverty, Bavius produces poetry, the muse of Maro is dull, Ennius is eloquent, Marcus is silent, Ulysses becomes foolish, Ajax in his folly is wise. He who in time past saw through the stratagem of Antæus and vanquished him, is vanquished by this prodigy, which subdues all others. If this madness infect a woman's mind, she runs into any conceivable crime, and beyond; the daughter treacherously kills her father, the sister her brother, the wife her husband, anticipating the hand of fate. And thus in the evil progression she hews her husband's body, and with stealthy sword

<sup>1</sup> Alain plays on the words—*instabilis ludus, stabilis delusio*.

<sup>2</sup> Reading *hæc*, with B.

severs his head. Even the mother is forced not to know the name of parent, and, while she is giving birth, gives birth also to lies. The son is horror-stricken to find in his mother a stepmother, in faith  
45 deceit, in piety guile. Thus in Medea two names fight equally, for at one time she desires to be both mother and stepmother. The sister knows not her station, or how to keep herself a sister, when Byblis has become too far a friend of Caunus. So also Myrrha,  
50 too subject to her sire, was a parent with her progenitor, and a mother with her father. But why should I tell more? Under the spear of Cupid must each lover go, and pay him his dues. He wages war against all; his rule excepts hardly a one; he smites all things  
55 with the anger of his lightning, and against him neither probity nor prudence will be of effect, nor beauty of form, nor abundance of riches, nor the height of nobility. Thefts, lies, fear,<sup>1</sup> anger, fury, deceit, violence, error, sadness possess his strange dominions. Here  
60 it is reason to be without reason, moderation to be unrestrained, faith to have no faith. Displaying the sweet, he adds the bitter, instils poison, and finishes best things with an evil end. Attracting he seduces, laughing he jeers, with smarting ointment he anoints,  
65 laying hold he corrupts, loving he hates. Yet thou canst thyself bridle that madness, if thou fleest—no stronger medicine is given. If thou wouldest escape Love, shun his places, his times; both place and time give him nourishment. If thou followest him,  
70 he attends; by fleeing, he is put to flight; if thou retreatest, he retires; if thou fleest, he flies.

<sup>1</sup> Reading *metus*, with B.

## PROSE V.

*Jam ex hoc meæ doctrinæ artificio.*

Now the theory of the art of love has appeared clearly to thee from my skillful presentation, and through the book of experience thou wilt be able to acquire for thyself its practice. And it is not strange if in this portrayal of Cupid I intersperse slight signs of blame, although he is allied to me by the connection of own blood-relationship. Disparaging malice, with its deep rust, did not drive me to these upbraiding and reproving censures, nor the intensity of burning hate breaking forth from within, nor the tyrant of jealousy raging furiously without, but the fear lest I should seem to strangle clear and eloquent truth by silence. I do not deny the essential nature of love honorableness if it is checked by the bridle of moderation, if it is restrained by the reins of sobriety, if it does not transgress the determined boundaries of the dual activity, or its heat boil to too great a degree. But if its spark shoots into a flame, or its little spring rises to a torrent, the rankness of the growth demands the pruning-knife, and the swelling and excess requires an assuaging medicine; for all excess disturbs the progress of well-regulated temperance, and the pride of unhealthy extravagance fattens, so to speak, into imposthumes of vices.

The former poetical discourse, then, which strayed into playful jest, is set before thee as a treat for thy childishness. Now let the style, which had slightly wandered toward the boyish and light verses of thy youth, return to the ordered theme of the narration previously planned. As I showed in touching on the

subject before, I appointed Venus to build up a progeny from the living creatures of earth, that in  
her work of producing things she might shape in the rough various materials, and lay them before me. But I, in the manifold formation of their natures, was to add the execution of the final and polishing hand. And in order that faithful tools might exclude the confusion of poor work, I have assigned to her two lawful hammers, by which she may bring the stratagems of the Fates to naught, and present to view the multi-form subjects of existence. Also I appointed for her work anvils, noble instruments, with a command that she should apply these same hammers to them, and faithfully give herself up to the forming of things, not permitting the hammers to leave their proper work, and become strangers to the anvils. For the office of writing I provided her<sup>1</sup> with an especially potent reed-pen, in order that, on suitable leaves desiring the writing of this pen (in the benefit of my gift of which leaves she had been made a sharer), she might, according to the rule of my orthography, trace the natures of things, and might not suffer the pen to stray in the least measure possible from the path of proper description into the by-track of false writing. But since for the production of progeny the rule of marital coition, with its lawful embraces, was to connect things unlike in their opposition of sexes, I, to the end that in her connections she should observe the orthodox constructions of grammatical art, and that the nobility of her work should not mar its glory by ignorance of any branch of knowledge, taught her, as a pupil worthy to be taught, by friendly precepts under my guiding discipline, what rules of the grammatical art she should

<sup>1</sup> Reading *eidem*, with Migne.

admit in her skilful connections and constructions, and what she should exclude as irregular and not redeemed by any justifying figure. For although natural reason recognizes, as grammar corroborates, two genders specially, namely masculine and feminine—albeit some men, deprived of the sign of sex, can be thought of in my opinion by the designation of neuter—yet I enjoined Cypris, with the most friendly admonitions, and under the most powerful thunder of threats, to solemnize in her connections, as reason demands, only the natural union of the masculine with the feminine gender. For, since according to the demand of nuptial custom the masculine gender takes to itself its feminine gender, if the joining of these genders should be celebrated irregularly, so that members of the same sex should be connected with each other, that construction would not earn pardon from me, either by the help of evocation or by the aid of conception. For if the masculine gender by some violent and reasonless reasoning should demand a like gender, the relation of that connection could not justify its vice by any beauty of figure, but would be disgraced as an inexcusable and monstrous solecism.

Furthermore, my command enjoined Cypris that, in her constructions, she have regard to the ordinary rules for nouns and adjectives, and that she appoint that organ which is especially marked with the peculiarity of the feminine sex to the office of noun, and that she should put that organ characterized by the signs of the masculine sex in the seat of the adjective. Thus should it be that neither the adjective should be able to fall into the place of the noun, nor should the noun remove into the region of the adjective. And since each is influenced by the other,

by the laws of necessity the adjective is attracted according to its modifying quality, and the noun as is proper in a thing retentive of substantive nature.

145 Besides this, I added that the Dionean conjugation should not admit into its uniform use of transitive construction either a defective use, or the circuity of reflexiveness, or the excess of double conjugation—it being rather contented with the direct course of single  
150 conjugation—nor should suffer by the irruption of any wandering influence to such degree that the active voice should become able by a usurping assumption to cross over into the passive, or the latter by an abandonment of its peculiar nature to turn into the  
155 active, or, retaining under the letters of the passive the nature of the active, to assume the law of the deponent. Nor is it strange if many conjugations, characterized by the mark of fullest grammatical strength, suffer repulse from the dwelling of the  
160 art of Venus; for though she admits into the bosom of her friendship those which follow her rules and direction, yet those which in the boasting of a most eloquent contradiction<sup>1</sup> try to overthrow her laws, she suspends in the exclusion of an eternal  
165 anathema.

The voice of controversial logic, moreover, will acknowledge that very many powerful connections draw upon divers stores of strength—though there are some which have no freedom to go beyond their own stations  
170 and restraints. And since I knew that Venus was entering into conflict and sharp argument against the active opposition of the Fates, I gave<sup>2</sup> her, according to the maxims of controversial learning, and to the end that she should not fall into the closing trap  
175 of a conclusion at the hands of Atropos through any

<sup>1</sup> Reading *contradictionis*, with B.

<sup>2</sup> Emending to *docebam*.

deceiving trick,<sup>1</sup> instruction that she transcend the formal limits of her own arguments, and that she find the lurking-place of false deceit in those of her opponents. So might she the more safely carry on the contest and dispute against the wiles of the adversary, and by her earnestness refute the false arguments<sup>2</sup> of her opponents. Moreover, I added that a syllogistic conclusion in the due order of three propositions should be arranged, but that it should be content with an abridgment to two terms, following none of the Aristotelian figures; being of such sort that in every proposition the major extreme should perform the office of the predicate, and the minor should be the subject, and be bound by its laws. In the first proposition the predicate should cling to the subject,<sup>150</sup> not in the manner of true inherence, but simply by the way of external connection, as with a term predicated from a term. In the minor proposition the major term should be joined to the minor more closely by the reciprocal pressure of the kisses of relation.<sup>155</sup> But in the conclusion there should be celebrated, in the truer bond of closest inherence, the fleshly connection of subject<sup>3</sup> and predicate. It was also part of my plan that the terms in the conclusion of love should not, by any pernicious and retrograding conversion, following the laws of predication by analogy, change their places and stations. And to the end that no false consequent, born from terms like and equal, should be able to hinder the work of Venus, I distinguished the terms with special marks,<sup>160</sup> that she might plainly recognize with familiar insight and easy perception what term, from the law of their

<sup>1</sup> Reading *fallacie*, with Migne.

<sup>2</sup> Reading *argumenta*, with B. and Migne.

<sup>3</sup> Reading *subjecti*, with B. and Migne.

nature, the more humble step of the subject demands,  
 175 and what the loftier summit of the predicate; for so,  
 if a conclusion should inconsequently have its terms  
 out of right relation, there should not still arise com-  
 plete deformity and continual folly.

Furthermore, just as it has been my purpose to attack  
 175 with bitter hostility<sup>1</sup> certain practices of grammar and  
 logic, and exclude them from the schools of Venus,  
 so I have forbidden to the arts of Cypris those met-  
 onymic uses of rhetoricians which Mother Rhetoric  
 embraces in her wide bosom, and inspires as her speech  
 180 with many graces; for I feared lest if, in the pursuit  
 of too strained a metaphor, she should change the  
 predicate from its protesting subject into something  
 wholly foreign, cleverness would be too far<sup>2</sup> converted  
 into a blemish, refinement into grossness, fancy into  
 185 a fault, ornament into a gaudy show.

With these distinctive marks of splendor and no-  
 bility, the earthly presence of Venus came into thy  
 native sphere. Most energetically she labored with  
 190 the aid of her instruments in weaving the series of  
 human birth, mending with a slender needle those  
 parts that had been sundered by the hands of the  
 Fates, and more subtly still joining these one to  
 another. And thus did she once, with the most  
 obedient care, perform to me the dues of her tributary  
 195 administration. But<sup>3</sup> since the soul, when glutted  
 from its birth with a satiety of the same thing,<sup>4</sup> comes  
 to loathe it, and its desire to accomplish is extinguished  
 by attack on the daily labor, the uniform character  
 of the work so many times repeated tired<sup>5</sup> and dis-  
 gusted Cytherea,<sup>6</sup> and the effect of continued labor

<sup>1</sup> Reading *incursu*, with B. and Migne.

<sup>2</sup> Reading *nimir*, with B.

<sup>3</sup> Reading *sed*, with B. and Migne.

<sup>4</sup> Reading *identitate*, with Migne.

<sup>5</sup> Reading *infestavit*, with Migne.

<sup>6</sup> Reading *Cytheream*, with B. and Migne.

took away the wish to perform. She, then, wishing ~~so~~ rather to be pampered in unfruitful love than to be exercised in fruitful labors, though she had been entrusted, as related, with the busy work of a festal activity, began to be young and childish over the joys of extreme idleness. Now with whom sluggish ~~so~~ inactivity has gained a stronghold, by him all service of virtue is rejected, and the unproductiveness of sloth is wont to form its abundance of misshapen offspring; draining a flood of drink, he wantons in excessive licentiousness, and his unrestrained gormandizing of ~~so~~ food throws back like vomit from its surfeit. Venus, stung by these fatal passions, began as a concubine, defiling the chastity of her marriage-bed<sup>1</sup> in the polluting sin of adultery against her husband Hymen, to commit fornication with Antigamus. Enmeshed in ~~so~~ the ruin-bringing suggestions of her adulterer, she has unreasonably changed a spontaneous work into a mechanical, a normal into an abnormal, a refined into a gross, and, corrupting my precept taught her, has denied the hammers the association of their proper ~~so~~ anvils, and condemned them to the adulterous anvils. Moreover, the natural anvils bewail the absence of their hammers, and are seen sadly to demand them. And she who was wont to hold out the shield of defense to that sword of Atropos which severs all ~~so~~ things, now has become bound to the latter in a mutual alliance on firm consideration, and permits the sickle of fate to run out far into the grain of the human race, and does not repair the loss<sup>2</sup> with renewed<sup>3</sup> birth from any fresh seed. But rather, destroy- ~~so~~

<sup>1</sup> Reading *tori castitatem peste adulterationis incestans*, with Migne.

<sup>2</sup> Placing a comma before *damnum*, and omitting the one after it, with Migne.

<sup>3</sup> Reading *rediviva*, with B.

ing herself in grammatical constructions, and perverting herself in dialectical conversions, she changes her art by the gaudy ornaments of rhetoric into artifice, and her artifice into viciousness.

335 While in her wild fornication she was continuing the illicit actions of concubinage with the adulterer, she conceived offspring from him, and became the parent of a bastard for a son. Though this latter does not rejoice in any pleasure or delight, or wish to bask in any of  
 340 the joys of mirth, yet she, to the end that he might be called, as by antiphrasis, Mirth, in the absence of mirth, placed the name of that disposition upon him. To Dione, then, were given two sons, divided by differences in kind, unlike by law of their birth, dis-  
 345 similar in the marks of their qualities, ill-agreeing in the variance of their occupation. For Hymen, who is related to me by the bond of brotherhood from the same mother, and whom a stock of excellent worth produced, begot to himself from Venus a son  
 350 Cupid. But Antigamus, scurrilous and descended from a race of ignobility, by his adultery with Venus has lightly become the father of an illegitimate son, Mirth. A solemn marriage accounts for the birth of the former; a low and notorious concubinage denoun-  
 355 ces the descent of the latter. In the former<sup>1</sup> shines his father's culture and courtesy; in the latter<sup>2</sup> glooms the grossness of his father's brutality. The former dwells by gleaming springs, silvery in white splendors; the latter continually frequents places cursed with  
 360 perennial barrenness. The latter pitches his tent on the desert plain; the former is pleased with the wooded valley. The latter without cease spends the night in taverns; the former continues days and nights under

<sup>1</sup> Reading *ille*, with Migne.

<sup>2</sup> Emending *ille* to *iste*.

the clear sky. The former<sup>1</sup> wounds those whom he pursues with golden hunting-spears; the latter<sup>2</sup> lances those whom he strikes with iron javelins. The former<sup>3</sup> intoxicates his guests with a nectar not bitter; the latter<sup>4</sup> ruins with the sour drink of absinthe.

Now my discourse has traced on the chart of thy mind the manner in which the ruinous evil of idleness has produced inordinate love; how the excess and deluge <sup>260</sup> of drink has brought to pass love's raging lust; how, taking its rise in gluttony, the ivory-white leprosy of licentiousness has destroyed great numbers. Up to this point I have sung a sorrowful song of suffering and lament over those lying sick with the acute fever <sup>275</sup> of sensual passion. Now as to the rest, whom the unhealthy rout of other vices confounds, let us tune the cithara of our complaint to the manner of elegiac song. For many, while they shun and avoid the abysmal mouths of greedy Charybdis, yet are miserably <sup>280</sup> shipwrecked by unthought peril in the depths of black Scylla. And very many, while they escape the ruinous rush of the vehement flood, become stuck in the greedy slime of the sluggish fen. Others, while they avoid with care and caution the precipices of the steep <sup>285</sup> mountain, dash themselves together on the level plain by their own headlong haste. Such matters, then, as I cast into thy mind, fasten there by the nail of retentive memory, and by watchfulness of soul shake off slothful sleep, so that, stirred by my maternal <sup>290</sup> feelings, thou mayest sympathize and condole over the ruin of desperate men, and, armed with the shield of early admonition, meet the monstrous force of vices, and, if any herb of base seed dare to sprout in the

<sup>1</sup> Emending *iste* to *ille*.

<sup>2</sup> Emending *iste* to *ille*.

<sup>3</sup> Emending *ille* to *iste*.

<sup>4</sup> Emending *ille* to *iste*.

•93 garden of thy mind, mayest cut it and root it out  
with a timely sickle.'

Then said I :

'Now long since my mind has rejoiced in the profit  
of thy teaching, and inclined a most willing ear to  
300 thy censures.'

#### METRE VI.

*Heu! quam præcipitem passa ruinam.*

'Alas!' she said, 'suffering what headlong ruin  
does virtue labor, lying conquered under vice! All  
the beauty of virtue is banished; the bridles of mad-  
ness are loosed for evil: the day of justice fades;  
• hardly the shadow of its shadow is left surviving;  
lacking light, abounding in night, it bewails the ex-  
tinguished star of its glory. While the lurid lightning  
of crime blasts the world, the darkness of guile clouds  
the planet<sup>1</sup> of faith, and no stars of the virtues redeem  
• the abyss of that darkness. The evening of faith lies  
upon the world, and the night of the chaos of false-  
hood is everywhere. Faith sickens with fraud; fraud,  
too, deceives itself by fraud, and thus guile is upon  
the heels of guile. In the sphere of conduct, morals  
•5 lack morality; laws lack law; justice loses the right-  
eousness of its course. For all justice is executed  
without justice, and law flourishes without law. The  
world grows worse, and now its golden age departs.  
The poverty of iron clothes it; of old the glory of  
• gold invested it. Now guile does not seek the robe  
of hypocrisy, nor does the foul odor of vice look for  
the balsams of the virtues to furnish a mantle for  
its stench. The nettle, indeed, does<sup>2</sup> cloak its pov-

<sup>1</sup> Reading *astrum*, with B.

<sup>2</sup> Reading *Sic urtica*, with Migne.

erty with roses, sea-weed with hyacinths, dross with silver, rouge-paint with a true glow, that thus, for a time, as appearance may make amends for evil. But crime puts off all ornaments, nor colors itself with the light of justice. For vice strips itself openly; falsehood becomes the tongue of its own madness. What safety remains when guile arms the very mothers against their own bowels, when brotherly love labors in untruth, when the right hand lies to its sister? The law of goodness—to esteem good men—is considered false, and the law of piety is impiety, and to be pure is to all a cause of disgrace. Without shame inhuman man repudiates the proper practices of humanity. Then, degenerate, he takes up the base actions of a brute, and thus, worthy to be unmanned, forsakes his manhood.'

## PROSE VI.

*Ad hanc ego: Quoniam in area generalitatis.*

At this I pursued:

'Since my furthest knowledge wanders astray in this general field, and since particularity has been made a friend of the intellect, I wish that thou wouldest unfold, with variously colored and brilliant figures interspersed, the evils which thou impliest in this small round of a general statement.'

'Since it is unfitting' she replied, 'to deprive thy proper and meritorious request of its reward and satisfaction, it is right that the separate evils be pointed out to thee distinctively by individual signs. Inasmuch, then, as it has been told how the whole world is endangered by the almost universal fire of impure love, there now remains to be shown how it is ship-



15 wrecked on the most universal flood of intemperance. Seeing that intemperance is a sort of preface to the performance and excitement of love, and antecedent to the amorous consequent, note that certain daughters of the old Idololatria, who was in time past completely crushed, make the attempt to renew the power of their mother in the immediate present, and, by certain magic songs, to revive her from the dead. In their meretricious employment they brighten their appearance with the countenance of deceiving delight, 25 and fraudulently lure on their lovers. Also, with sad joy, with friendly cruelty, with hostile friendship, like sirens they sweetly bear on their lips the melody of pleasure, even into destruction itself, leading on their lovers through to the shipwreck of idolatry. One of 30 them, to speak by a fictitious name, can be called by the fit appellation Bacchilatria. This Bacchilatria, who steals the spark of reason from her lover, and exposes him to the darkness of brutish sensuality, after the manner of a harlot so intoxicates him that 35 he is forced to desire wine beyond measure; so much indeed, that the drinker, in being bound to Bacchus by the chain of intemperate enjoyment, is thought to exhibit the majesty of his cult. Therefore the man Bacchilatra very frequently prefers that Bac- 40 chus—like relics of his own shrine—should not be separated from him by interval in space, and does not allow his god to delay too long in the walls of alien vessels; but that the divinity of the god may assist him the more intimately, he shuts him up in 45 the jar of his own belly. But because most often the vessel of the stomach can not bear the divinity of so great a guest, the same god disgracefully goes off in liquid either through the arctic pole of the eastern door, or through the antarctic pole of the western

region. Many times, also, the worshiper of Bacchus designs a guest-chamber for him in the cups of goblets of very precious material, in order that his clear deity may shine out the more divinely in a vessel of gold. Thence this same goblet, which rivals the glories of the ether in its brightness, and strives with the green light of the emerald in its freshness, and far surpasses most savors in the excellence of its savor, incites the sons of drinking by its falsely divine qualities, so that they honor wine with ineffable love, as if it were the mystery of an unutterable godship. And, then, that nothing of the god remain undrained, they pierce through Bacchus to the very dregs, and so force their god ignobly to descend to the Tartarean depth of the belly. Thus, while they drop to the most general class of drinking, they rise to the superlative degree of drunkenness.

This evil not only is made an enemy to men of plebeian stock, but even causes the haughty necks of prelates to bend. And they to whom those delights of Bacchus, which the favor of nature has showered upon him, are not sufficient, though they usurp the attractions of learning, swallow also, in the voracious Charybdis of their gullet, Bacchus now rejoicing in a marriage with roses, now exhaling fragrance from various flowers, now claiming distinction from association with hyssop, now enriched externally with other gifts. And to such a degree, indeed, is this true that with no sea they suffer the shipwreck of drunkenness, without sorrow its sadness, without infirmity its sickness, without an opiate its sleep. Those who, fired with drunken energy, employ their time in hymns, break in on the verses with unnecessary interjection, and rudely let in the tempest of inebriation.

85 Not only the aforementioned passion for drink, but also a canine greediness for eating, entices very many. The abnormal desires of such, and their gross thoughts, dream of preparations of food. While they pay too fully their due of food to the daily tax-collector, he,  
90 more than loaded, has to pay back his debtor. They prize whatever they hold in the coffer of the stomach, and although neither rust can consume that trust with the tooth of corrosion, nor the guile of the stealthy thief snatch it away, nevertheless it vanishes  
95 more ignobly in the baser robbery of digestive heat. That they may more carefully fawn upon this tax-collecting stomach, they urge the purse to disgorge its treasure, the coffer to vomit its coins. Though within they enrich the belly with wealth of foods, without  
100 they are situated in sheer, naked, and lonely poverty. Now this pestilence, not contented with plebeian humility, extends itself quite deeply among prelates. These, degrading the office of baptism, baptize in the base font of spice salmon, pike, and other fish which  
105 are exceptional in equal excellence, and have been crucified in various martyrdoms of cookery, to the end that, by coming from such a baptism, they may acquire a varied and agreeable savor. Furthermore, on the same table the beast of the earth is drowned  
110 in the flood of spice, the fish swims in it, the bird is limed in its paste. And while so many species of animals are confined in the single prison-house of a belly, the creature of the sea wonders that the tribes  
115 that go on foot and the tribes of the air are buried with it in the same sepulchre. If freedom to go out is given them, the width of the door hardly suffices for their egress.

These evils form the bridge over which the brothels of licentiousness are reached. They are the prelimin-

aries through which one enters into the art of ...  
stealing. They are the source of diseases. They  
beget poverty. They are the nurses of discord,<sup>1</sup>  
the sisters of madness, the mothers of excess, the  
seekers after impurity. Because of them humanity  
transgresses the limits of modesty, disregards the re- ...  
straints of temperance, breaks to pieces the seals of  
chastity, pays no heed to the graciousness of my  
bounty. For though my liberality distributes to men  
so many dishes of food, and rains upon them such  
flowing cups, yet they, ungrateful for my favors, ...  
misusing lawful things in ways beyond all measure  
of law, and loosening the bridles of the throat, at the  
same time overstep the limits of eating and extend the  
lines of drinking indefinitely. They who seduce their  
palates with the tang of salts, that they may drink ...  
much and often, are still more often made to thirst.

There is also another daughter of Idololatria, whom,  
if characteristic name is to have similarity in its sound  
to her real nature, it is fitting to call with apt word  
Nummulatria. She is Avarice, through whose influence ...  
money is deified in men's minds, and the dignity of  
divine worship is extended to a coin. Through her  
influence, also, when a coin speaks, the trump of  
Ciceronian eloquence is hoarse; when a coin goes to  
war, the lightnings of Hector's warfare cease; when ...  
money battles, the strength of Hercules is subdued.  
For if one is armed with money as with a silver  
breastplate, the rush of the Ciceronian torrent, the  
splendor of the onset of Hector, the might and brave-  
ry of Hercules, the cunning craft of Ulysses, count ...  
only for light trifles. For to such a degree has the  
hunger for possession burned that subtle dialectics  
are silent, the culture of rhetoric languishes. When

<sup>1</sup> Omitting *vel desidiae*, with B. and Migne.

255 abundance of wealth makes the final plea, Cicero sells the riches of his eloquence, Lucretia changes the necklace of her chastity into the price of gold, Penelope resigns the purity and virtue of twenty years to a price, and Hippolytus, if he hear the petitions of  
260 the whispering coin, is not willing to treat sternly the entreaties of his stepmother. If money murmurs at the ear of an umpire, the lyre of Orpheus, the song of Amphion, the muse of Virgil, are smothered by its voice. Now the rich man, shipwrecked in the deep  
265 of wealth, thinks after money with the fires of dropsical thirst, and is set like a Tantalus in its midst. And the poor man, though he is not able really to practice actual avarice, yet within preserves a spiritual parsimony. O shame! Mass of metal secures honor,  
270 which is considered in proportion to the metal's weight. Not Cæsar now, but money, is all; for<sup>1</sup> like a mediator it runs through the honors one by one, from the smallest to those of the widest scope. Our patriarch now is money; for it sets some on the supreme  
275 throne of an archbishopric, raises others to the honor of a bishop's eminence, fits others for archidiaconal offices, makes others equal to employments in other positions of dignity. What further? Money conquers, money reigns, money commands all. What profits  
280 it in the chariot of Ptolomean subtlety to follow elusive astronomy in its swift flight, the prophecies of the stars, to track the free wanderings of the planets; with Euclid to search the inner secrets of the puzzles of geometry, with the intellect to descend  
285 into the depths of the sea, to touch the height of heaven by measurements that can be comprehended; with the Milesian to find the harmonious combinations of musical chords; with Pythagoras to examine the

<sup>1</sup> Reading *quia*, with Migne.

rivalry of numbers in the strength of their multiplication; with Cicero to star oratory with the brilliant constellations of rhetoric; with Aristotle to separate with the two-handed sword of logic the untrue from the true; with Zeno to clothe falsehood in deceptive probability; with Donatus to join the parts of speech in the tones of agreement—since wisdom in our times is rewarded with no pay or profit, no favorable breeze of fame lifts it aloft, and money itself buys the commendations of praise, the titles of honor?

But wisdom alone surpasses every possession. Though this noble property be scattered abroad, it reunites; though spent, it returns; though confiscated, it gains an increase. Through it the splendid treasure of science is produced in the mysterious secret places of the mind, and the enjoyment of internal delight is acquired. It is the sun from which the mind becomes like day in the midst of shadows; it is the eye of the heart, the rapturous paradise of the spirit. It turns the earthly into the heavenly by the power of godlike change, the perishable into the immortal, man into God. It is the true cure for error, the only solace for human misfortune, alone the morning-star of the night of humanity, the special redemption from thy misery. No fog of the air blurs its keenness, the thickness of earth does not bar its working, nor depth of water dim its vision. Although among those who are like brutes in bestial sensuality it sickens by reason of their gross vice, yet among those who have raised the spark of reason into its original fire it does not lack the favor of sounding fame. For though wisdom despises flattering applause and unsubstantial adulation, yet since it is the glorious property of true fame to scorn those who seek after it, and seek after those who scorn it, it attains fame by fleeing from

it, which it would lose by following. Therefore, if among  
 115 certain men thou seest money reigning, knowledge  
 lying prostrate, wealth militant, wisdom in exile, yet  
 do thou with victorious spirit throw down and trample  
 under foot the ignoble hoards of riches, and with the  
 love of inner affection follow after knowledge; for so  
 130 thou wilt be able with unimpeded gaze to look further  
 into the resting-place of Mother Wisdom.'

Then said I:

'I could wish that, giving free rein to reproof,  
 thou wouldest attack the daughters of Avarice more  
 145 fiercely.'

Then she, turning the course of her speech to severest censure and invective, said:

#### METRE VII.

##### *Postquam sacra fames auri mortalia pungit.*

'After the cursed hunger of gold pierces mortal breasts, the starved mind of man knows not rest.<sup>1</sup> It dissolves friendships, begets hate, incites anger, sows strife, nourishes dissension, lets loose war, breaks established bonds, stirs up sons against fathers, mothers against their own bowels, brings it to pass that brothers know not the togas of their brothers, and all those whom union of blood unites one madness wickedly divides. While the passion for having makes the stomach of the mind dropsical, the mind thirsts as it drinks, and, like another Tantalus, burns in the very water, and the abundance of wealth gives intensity to the thirst. So the satiated man hungers, the drunken thirsts, the one with plenty longs, the individual covets everything, and by that very covetousness is made poor, and stays wealthy without, but

<sup>1</sup> Reading *manere*, with Migne.

needy within. The wretch has nothing when he thinks that he has nothing, since<sup>1</sup> his longings balance his riches with poverty. Many enemies invade the lodging of the heart and the walls of his greedy mind, -- and with great tumult disturb the whole stronghold of the human breast. For fear marches upon the understanding, and likewise covetousness shakes it, and loots the whole city of the mind. Thus the avaricious wretch is agitated by a twofold crowd of cares. And while he fears things worthy to be feared, his mind itself often dreams new terrors and creates fear, and suffers misfortune in the fear of misfortune, and considers adversity and loss with utter consternation. Thus the dreams of terror picture various calamities, and fright conjures up falsehood of wife and knavery of thief and assault of enemy, and imagines swords threatening the neck, and the dire thunderbolts of those in power. Now it thinks on the evils of fire, now it conceives of the wrath of the ocean, now it is shipwrecked on blank fear. The mind of the rich man lingers over a coin, while he buries it in his chest, and the buried coin becomes dead to the miser's use. Not he, but the chest, possesses it, and claims the whole value of the money for itself. That the coffer may serve him various dishes of coins, the rich man inflicts the pangs of hunger on his own belly. The belly dreads avarice, and cannot understand why it is denied its proper revenues, and asks aid of the coffer, but the coffer turns to it deaf ears. The vision has food, and the eye makes merry, but, in solitude among silver, the belly is forced to meditate and brood, and suffers hunger with far-reaching desire. Nor do tears, nor the honey of prayers, nor poverty itself, plead so that the rich man does not devour the

<sup>1</sup> Reading *cum*, with Migne.

poor man for his gain, and pinch the wretch's little money-bag. He laughs at the tears of the poor, and feasts on the toil of the wretched, and makes their punishment his own repose. Grief possesses the one,  
ss laughter the other; jest the one, mourning the other.

The one groans, the other makes merry; the one grieves, while the other ceases from grieving. All sympathy of the rich and avaricious is lost in a desire for money; for there is no other pleasure allowed  
so the mind which can turn the face elsewhere. The rich man does not have riches, but is had by them. He is not a possessor of money, but money possesses him, and the miser's soul is buried among coins.  
These he cherishes as gods, on these idols he lav-  
es ishes the honor of divine worship, and ascribes god-  
like powers to them. Thus the reason of man, trampled  
by covetousness, serves the flesh, and like a hand-  
maid is compelled to wait upon it. Thus the eye of  
the heart sickens, blind from a fleshly mist, and suffers  
to its eclipse, to lead an inactive life in solitude. Thus  
the shadow of the flesh basely covers the splendor of  
human riches, and the glory of mind is made most  
inglorious. This manner of speech does not decry  
riches nor rich men, but rather labors to censure  
error. I do not condemn either possessions, or wealth,  
or the utility of a rich man, if his conquering spirit,  
with reason as its master, walks upon the wealth which  
it has cast below its feet—if, in short, reason, like an  
able charioteer, shall direct the application of riches.  
so For though a rich man scatters his whole wealth,  
shows presents, aspires to praise, and desires to  
gain favor by bounty—yet if the author of this munif-  
icence, the leader and director, is not reason, there  
will be no profit, since gifts do not merit commendation,  
ss but rather buy it, unless they be made becomingly and

with discretion. For frequently the return for a gift is hypocritical praise, a false pretense of fame, the ape of renown, a dull honor, a shadow of approval.

## PROSE VII.

*Ecce habes quomodo tenacis avaritiae viscus.*

There thou hast in what manner the tenacious lime of avarice deprives the wings of the human mind of liberty. Now is to be examined how the bombastic flatulence of insolent pride lifts the minds of men into arrogance. Tainted by the fatal contagion of this infirmity, a multitude of men, while they insolently exalt themselves above themselves, descend in ruin beneath, detract from themselves in their very arrogance, sink while they bear themselves aloft, destroy themselves in their self-elevation. Either the solemn pompousness of these men's words, or silence, the mother of suspicion, or some peculiarity of act, or rude idiosyncrasy of gesture, or excessive bedizening of the body, throws light upon the inner haughtiness of mind. For some, whom lowliness of servile condition debases, boast of majestic liberty. Others, while they are of common stock and plebeian race, in word at least make themselves of distinction in excellence of blood. Others, while they cry in the cradles of the grammatic art and are suckled at its breasts, profess the height of Aristotelian subtlety. Others, though numb with the ague-fits of a frightened hare, by the single remedy of verbosity present the courageous front of a lion. There are others who plainly reveal, by a silence merely external, what the pride of inner indignation shuts close. For they disdain to grant a share of mutual conversation to

others, whether these lie in the lower walk of life, or resemble themselves in equality of worth, or sway  
30 in more exalted eminence and dignity. If one request a word from them, the reply is separated from the question by such a great interval of silence that it seems unrelated to it by any tie. Others, who take pleasure in individualizing their acts, try everywhere  
35 to be lonely in a crowd, peculiar among the general, opposed to the universal, diverse in the midst of unity. For while others engage in conversation, they give themselves up to silence; while others relax in pleasures, they are seen to be involved with serious  
40 matters; while others are taken up with religious celebrations, they enjoy their ease in wanton pleasures; while others are bright of face with joyous humor, their countenances present a very tempest of malevolent severity. Others with external peculiarity of  
45 deportment betoken an inner demeanor of pride. These, as if they despised everything earthly, with heads thrown back look up to the things of heaven, indignantly turn aside their eyes, lift their eyebrows markedly, turn up their chins superciliously, and hold  
50 their arms as stiff as a bow; their feet graze the ground on tiptoe only. Others make their bodies too effeminate by means of woman's attire. They quiet, by the aid of a comb, the assembly of their hairs in such peace that no breeze can raise a stir in them;  
55 by the help of scissors they clip the fringes of the dense eyebrow, or pluck them up and root them out from the over-full wood; they bring to bear on the stripling beard the frequent treachery of the razor, that it may not dare to sprout ever so little; their  
60 arms cry out against the tightness of gloves, and their feet are imprisoned in narrow shoes. Alas, whence this arrogance, this pride in men? Their

birth is fraught with sorrow, trouble and pain consume their life, and the still more painful necessity of death ends even that pain. With them being is a moment, life a shipwreck, the world a banishment. Their life is either gone, or pledges itself to go; moreover death is upon them, or threatens momently to arrive.

Now from Pride is born a daughter, who possesses by inheritance the malevolence of her mother. She is Envy, and by the gnawing rust of continual detraction she destroys the minds of men. She is the worm because of whose bite health of mind sickens and falls into disease, soundness of mind rots into decay, rest of mind is abandoned for trouble. She is the guest who, after being lodged in her host's guest-chamber, pulls down the hospitable shelter. She is a possession which most evilly, nay dominantly, possesses its possessor; for while she troubles others with blatant obloquy, she disturbs more deeply with intestine fang the spirit of her possessor. She is Envy, who keeps the stings of her angry aspersions at rest as against those whom a hell of faults devours, those to whom the plan of nature denies the gifts of the body, those whom mad fortune vomits into poverty. But if any one swims with Croesus in the flood of riches, scatters wealth with Titus, disputes over his image with Narcissus, thunders with Turnus in courage, rejoices with Hercules in strength, is drunken with the poetic nectar of Homer, with Plato examines philosophy face to face, with Hippolytus is distinguished as the mirror of chastity—against such a one she discharges all the stings<sup>1</sup> of her detractions. For she attributes bravery to the wildness of fear, distorts prudence into guile and fraud, or into bombastic flatulence. Under her

<sup>1</sup> Reading *aculeos*, with Migne.

defamation, also, decency sinks into a gilded varnish of hypocrisy. This disease of envyousness corrupts very many, who, while they endeavor to mar the brightness of another's reputation, feel the first disparagement of their own good character. Another's prosperity is judged by them unfavorable, another's adversity favorable. They are sad at another's joy, are joyous at another's sadness. They measure their riches in another's poverty, and their own poverty in another's riches. They try to darken another's shining renown with a cloud of traducement, or to steal his glory by mere silence. They spoil the pure<sup>1</sup> brightness of another's virtue, or mix the ferment of falsehood with the true. O grief! What monster more monstrous than envy? What evil more destructive? What fault more to be condemned? What torment more full of punishment? It is the gulf for erring blindness, the hell of the human mind, the spur of contention, the sting of unrest. What are the emotions of envy but the enemies of human peace, the attendants of mental depredation, the hostile guard of a troubled spirit, the watch over another's felicity? What does it profit any one if fortune bright and favorable cheers him on, and his body rejoices in the glow of beauty, and his mind is luminous with the splendor of wisdom, when the robbery of livid envy plunders the riches of the mind, turns the brightness of prosperous fortune into the darkness of adversity, and debases the gold of beauty into foul dross, and when ignoble spite makes the glory of wisdom inglorious?

Yet if one wishes to banish the rust of malice, the moth of envy from the mind's treasure-house, let him find his grief in condoling with another's woe, let him rejoice in another's joy as his own, let him con-

<sup>1</sup> Reading *puram*, with B.

sider his riches in the riches of another, let him mourn his poverty in the poverty of another. If thou shouldst see another's good name honored and celebrated, do thou by no disparagement make this festival of praise a common day, but let the lamp of the other's virtue be brought before the whole company, and shine forth the more fairly in the noonday of thy speech. If thou observest any that are giving way to sharp depreciation of another's honors and good fame, either withdraw thyself from the blatant herd, or dull the slanderous tongues by reproof and correction. Bring the brawling to naught, wear away the teeth of corrosion, consume the biting scandal.

To this list of vices Flattery joins her share of evil. By this pest and plague are smitten the adherents of chief men, palace dogs, artisans of flattery, manufacturers of praise, molders of falsehood. These are they who sound the grandiloquent trump of commendation in the ears of the rich; who throw out the honey of sweetest flattery; who, that they may cozen him out of gifts, anoint the head of the rich man with the oil of adulation; who offer lulling praises to the hearing of prelates; who either shake from the coats of such men a fictitious dust, or pretend to pick a feather off a featherless garment. By the beggarly means of praise they buy employment from the rich, on which the favor of fame spits indignantly. On gaining presents they laud, on acquiring gifts they flatter, on the possession of reward they publish fair-spoken report. For if a torrent of generosity flashes in the gift of a rich man, the flatterer is all poured out in the lavishness of his encomiums. But if the gift savors of sluggish and wintry avarice, the greedy sycophant grows cold in his praise and commendation of it. If expression for the gift seems to require ap-

plauding drums, the poet of blandishment swells up in a grandiose style of eulogy. But if the poverty of the gift begs plaudits from fame, he lessens the report of its worth by a more humble style; for it is  
270 when the size of the gift is eloquent that the flatterer vomits from the treasury of his heart hypocritical praises, insincere applause, easy perjuries. For though he whom the gift represents have been whelmed by such a tempest of ugliness that hardly the fragments  
275 of natural gifts are evident in him, yet the poems of flattery will talk vainly to him of the prerogative of beauty, will falsely say that the pygmean cells of his pusillanimous heart are palaces, will exalt the base shadows of dull avarice to the mountain-top of  
280 generosity, will feign that his low and plebeian stock has the majestic distinction of Cæsarean nobility. What further? Though a plenitude of vices should take up their abode in a man, and he be not redeemed from his faults by any virtue, yet the mer-  
285 cenary dealer in flatteries, so long as the mediating gift comes to meet him, thinly colors the sight of the vices with the light tunic of commendation. On the other hand, though the noon-blaze of all beauty should brighten in another's countenance, though his tongue  
290 should be resplendent with the silvery pearls of eloquence, though the chamber of his mind should shine with the jewels of the virtues, yet if the artisan of blandishment does not expect the favor of a gift, he labors to mingle with the light of this great glory the dark-  
295 ness of deadly vices. What is the ointment of flattery, then, but a cozening for gifts? What is light com-  
mendation but the deception of prelates? What the approval of praise but the deriding of its very sub-  
300 jects? For though speech is usually the faithful in-  
terpreter of the thought, words accurate pictures of

the soul, the countenance the sign of the will, the tongue the prophet of the mind, yet flatterers divorce the countenance from the will, the word from the soul, the tongue from the mind, the speech from the thought, by a wide interval of separation. For many applaud with outward, shining praise those whom they with internal mockery deride. And in the open they extol and commend many cordially, whom they in secret cheat with hostility and scorn. Externally they compliment with an innocent countenance; internally they pierce with scorpion's sting. Outwardly they rain down the honeyed showers of flattery; inwardly they belch the sharp storms of detraction.'

Then I, restraining the swift course of her unpauseing speech, said:

'I could wish that thou wouldest strengthen the fort of my mind against the furious armies of these vices by the bulwarks of thy teaching, which are founded on reason.'

#### METRE VIII.

*Nec te gulosæ Scylla voraginiis mergat.*

'To the end,' she answered, 'that Scylla of the greedy whirlpool do notwhelm thee in the deep night of self-indulgence, apply the curbs of moderation to thy palate, pay thy belly its due most temperately, let the path of thy throat taste the rain of Lyæus, the draughts of Bacchus, soberly, drink but little, that the mouth may be thought to give a sort of kiss to the wine-god's cup. Let water break the pride of Lyæus, streams temper the madness of Bacchus; let Thetis offer herself as a wife to Lyæus, and the wife curb the tyranny of the husband. Let a common,

simple, spare diet wear out the mutinies of the haughty flesh. That the despot who always exults in the flesh may drive thee the less, let quiet Cupid take his rest. Let the bridles of love be checked in thee, and the sting of the flesh faint and be numb, and let the flesh thus become the handmaid of the spirit. Restraine thine eyes, and put bolts upon the door of thy vision, lest it hunt too unvirtuously beyond the reach of the light, and, like a scout, lay its booty before the mind. If the passion of greed intoxicates any, let them force it to depart from them, let ostentation note the wealth of the mind, the triumph of the mind, let the neck of desire be bent and bowed, nor even let the money linger in the shut money-bags and sleep inactive, free to no one, but let it rather keep watch as the guardian of honor, to be put by the rich man to use. If the time be at hand, if the place require, let the buried mass of wealth rise up, the money-bags cast up coins from their very depths. Let bounty serve honor in any way it can. If thou wishest to tread on the neck of pride, on swollen arrogance, on ostentation of the spirit, consider the burden of thy fleeting race, the toil of life, the close of death.'

## PROSE VIII.

*Cum in hanc specialis discipline semitam.*

While Nature's discourse was proceeding along this particular path of instruction, behold, a man, appearing suddenly and to my amazement, having given no previous warning sign to our attention, showed his presence to our sight. He, for he seemed obedient to no law of age, now was young in the spring of

youth, now his maturer face spoke of serious affairs, and now was seen to be ploughed by the furrows of old age. Just as he would alter through many degrees of changing age in face, so his doubtful<sup>1</sup> stature was now made short and insignificant; now his slight figure would be increased according to the scale of an equally balanced mean; now, growing up in bold height, he would rival the towering giants. In his face were evident no traces of feminine softness; the strength of manly dignity reigned there alone. It was neither flooded with the rains of tears, nor brightened with the pleasures of laughter, but, watched over by both in moderation, tended rather toward tears. His hair had gained a truce in fight, and confessed the industry of the skillful comb. Yet it lay arranged in manner seemly and proper, so that it should not stray into extravagant ornament, and be seen to fall to a feminine delicacy. And that the least cloud of hair should not hide his broad forehead, the fringes of his locks had known the biting shears. And his face also, as manly dignity demanded, did not vary at all from favor and beauty. His chin now would sprout the first down, now would be fringed with a longer beard, now would seem to run wild in an abundant fleece, and now the severity of a razor would reprove the growth's excess. Rings, gemmed with constellations of stones, shone on his hands with extraordinary splendor, and displayed a new sun. His garments appeared now to be common, of poor make and coarse substance, now to rejoice in the most skillful woof of fine material. On them ideal pictures told of the events of marriage, though the soot of time<sup>2</sup> had almost made the images fade. Yet

<sup>1</sup> Reading *staturam ancipitem*, with Migne.

<sup>2</sup> Reading *vetustatis*, with Migne.

.40 nevertheless the eloquence of the picture spoke of what was woven therein—the holy faith of marriage, the peaceful unity of wedlock, the equal yoke of matrimony, the indissoluble bond of the wedded. For in the book of imagery it was obscurely told what .45 festal exultation was wont to cheer the beginning of a nuptial, what solemn sweetness of melody was there, how the guests, single and united, applauded the marriage, what patrimony the sociable and jocund cithara established. Furthermore,<sup>1</sup> an ordered company .50 of men skilled in music honored his approach. But these same musicians showed among themselves the sorrow of their master, and enjoined silence upon their instruments. Thereupon the frames of the instruments, which dull silence had made tongueless, .55 seemed to raise a groan. Then, when he had approached close to where Nature stood, she, calling him by name, offered him a greeting and gave him a kiss. Then from the designation of his name and from the telling signs of other circumstances, I re-.60 cognized him who had come as Hymen. Him Nature placed at her right hand, and granted him its honor.

While cheerful conversation was being enjoyed between Nature and Hymen, behold, with sudden appearance and unlooked-for coming, a virgin, the dawn .65 of whose beauty charmed all things, was seen to approach on her course toward our presence. In her loveliness was evident such high and holy art that the finger of Nature, the finisher, had not failed in any particular. Her countenance borrowed no false .70 or foreign color; but the right hand of most powerful Nature had planted there, with marvelous grafting, the rose vying with the lily. Her eyes were

<sup>1</sup> Placing a period after *generalis*, and reading *quoque* for *qua*, with Migne

governed by simple modesty, and did not wanton in any impudent sally. Her lips, retentive of their freshness, seemed neither drained by pleasures nor <sup>75</sup> to have felt the first kisses of passion. Yet one would think that her face, which flowed with tears, had suffered sorrow of shipwreck in the flood of weeping. A wreath of lilies, strung by a beautiful chain, smiled on her lovely head. Yet the whiteness <sup>80</sup> of her swan-like hair scorned to ask for the radiance of the lilies, and gave out continually a rival lustre. Her garments, furthermore, would have silenced with their truer snows the arguments of the whiteness of the others, had not a picture, mingled with various <sup>85</sup> colors, cheated them of their purity. For on her garments was seen interwoven, after the fancy of a picture, how the chastity of Hippolytus was defended by a wall of constancy, and how it zealously opposed and repelled a stepmother's lustful desires. There <sup>90</sup> Daphne, lest the bolt and bar of her virginity should be broken through, put to rout the enticements of Phœbus by flight. There Lucretia set off the loss of violated chastity by the gain of death. There, in the mirror of the picture, I could catch sight of Penelope, mirror of <sup>95</sup> purity. And, to include the picture's many eloquent but subtle touches in a brief way of speaking, it had been careful not to cheat any daughter of chastity of her meed of praise. A noble seal of gold, studded by a starry multitude of jasper stones, shone like day <sup>100</sup> on the right hand of the virgin. On her left hand sat a turtle-dove, which in the manner of elegiac song tuned the cithara of its voice to sorrowful moans. A band of young girls, none of whom seemed to have wantoned in the wrestling-ground of love, <sup>105</sup> clung to her footsteps, to comfort her journey and do her obedient service. When Nature had perceived



her near and close at hand, she left her seat, and, coming to her with solemn approach, showed outwardly by her first salutation, by her welcoming kiss, and by the joining in embrace, the love for her in her mind. And when at the beginning of the salutation the name of this virgin shone forth, I recognized there the arrival of Chastity.

Now while Nature was welcoming her with glad conversation, behold, a matron, with moderate and measured gait, was seen to be directing her way toward us. Her stature was bound within the limits of the mean. Her age tended toward the noon-hour of life; yet in no respect did the noon hinder the dawn of beauty. The hoar-frost of old age was trying to scatter its snows on her hair. This she did not allow to play in free waves over her shoulders, but held its luxuriance in bounds. Her garments did not seem to boast of the glory of fine material, nor to bewail their loss in being made of common stuff. Obedient to the canons of moderation, they neither escaped and strayed from the surface of the ground, cut short and curtailed in excessive brevity, nor did they clothe the face of the earth with needless length, but touched it with the brief taste of a kiss; for a girdle governed the fall of her tunic, and recalled irregularity to rule. A collar kept watch over the entrances to her bosom, and denied the hand admission. On her garments a picture showed with faithful characters what circumscription ought to be in the words of man, what circumspectness in his deeds, what moderation in dress, what serenity in bearing, what bridling of the mouth in eating, what reproof of the throat in drink. Her Nature recognized, though surrounded by few attendants, and hastened to meet and welcome her, showing the full measure of her love by the warm

greeting with which she began, and by concluding with manifold kisses. The clear expression of her right name told of the gracious arrival of Temperance. 145

And while Nature was receiving the presence of Temperance with the gift of a friendly salutation, behold, a woman, the daylight of whose beauty, when presented, threw continually on the glory of the actual day the splendor of a brighter countenance, was seen 150 hurrying her quick course and bending her direct approach toward us. Her stature had scorned the poverty of human stature in its growth, and exceeded it in unusual degree. Her head did not bow humbly to the ground or bear a face cast down, but, with 155 neck straight, fixed its gaze on things above, and kept the shaft of its vision for the heights. Nature had finished her appearance with such careful perfection that she could admire in it her own diligence as a maker. A diadem, which did not redeem pov- 160 erty of material by pre-eminence of workmanship, or atone for meanness of workmanship by fineness of material, but which showed in both a supreme monarchy without the pain of that absolute state, glowed on her head. Yet her golden hair, more flaming and 165 with lovelier fire, seemed to afford a seat to the golden diadem indignantly. Not cut short by industrious scissors, nor collected into companies of locks, it wantoned in freer wandering, and, crossing the limits of the shoulders, was seen to condescend to the poor 170 estate of earth. Her arms were not bound to a scant shortness, but, extending in ample length, seemed not destined to shrink, but rather to increase further. Her hands, which did not turn back in any hollow curve, but which lay open, ample and broad, cared for the 175 offices of giving. Her garments, which had their substance of golden and silken threads joined in the

kiss of the web—such that the fineness of the workmanship was inferior<sup>1</sup> to the richness of the material  
 180—rejoiced in such evidences of art that you would think that a hand, not of earth, but from very heaven, had toiled at their making. On them an imaginative but lifelike picture condemned, by reproach and anathema, with its art's deceptive illusion, those  
 185 men who toil in the notorious sin of avarice. It seemed, moreover, to honor the sons of generosity by the praise of fame, and to make them sharers in the grace of her benediction. While this woman, closely accompanied by three attendants, pressed  
 190 on in her haste to approach, behold, Nature ran quickly to meet her and welcomed her coming, and, dividing her kiss with a salutation, closed her salutation with a kiss. And while the singular distinction of her beauty, the elegance of her unusual apparel,  
 195 the individuality of her bearing, were speaking openly of the arrival of Generosity, the sound of her name in the salutation took<sup>2</sup> the credibility of the matter away from the cloud of doubt.

Then while Nature was performing to Generosity  
 200 the duties of salutation and friendly welcome, behold, a maiden of slow and somewhat sadder step, calmer in the peace of her dove-like countenance, and lowlier in her small and slender figure, encouraged herself to turn to us her gentle and measured  
 205 approach. Yet her grace and her beauty came to plead in behalf of<sup>3</sup> the slight stature. For these, acquired not by the mechanical deceits of human art, but gushing from the living fountain of nature, had breathed upon her whole body with the graces of lowness. Her hair had been cut with such hungry scis-

<sup>1</sup> B. has *non degeneraret*, was not inferior.   <sup>2</sup> Emending *excepti* to *exceptit*.

<sup>3</sup> Reading *venerat in patronum*, with Migne.

sors, that, shortened in the fashion of the cutting, it had passed into a blemish. But some tresses which wandered and strayed irregularly, and were entangled with inextricable confusion, seemed to be at strife within themselves. Her head was cast down with profound abasement, and humbly bowed toward the ground. Her garments, which did not fail from their native color through the addition of any foreign hue, excused the commonness of their ordinary material by their artistic workmanship. Here was read, written in the imaginative fancies of a picture, how in the list of virtues humility shines foremost, carrying the banner of excellence; how by the holy synod of the virtues pride is anathematized with the mark of excommunication, and condemned to banishment and uttermost destruction. To meet her, then, as she approached, Nature went with especial haste, and, as she sweetened the dish of her salutation with the spice of kisses, showed a face of deep affection. In the peculiar phrases of this distinguished personage was made clear the arrival of Humility.

Then while Hymen and these women were copying the appearance of profound sorrow from the face of Nature, and were striving to produce in lines of outward grief the feelings of inward pain, lo, Nature, anticipating their speech with speech, said:

‘O lonely lamps in human darkness, morning stars of a setting world, scattered planks to those suffering shipwreck, solitary ports on earthly floods! I perceive, with a mature and deep-rooted understanding, what is<sup>1</sup> the reason for your coming together, what the occasion for your arrival, what the cause of your lamentation, what the source of your grief. For men who are fashioned only in the beauty of humanity,

<sup>1</sup> Reading *sit*, with Migne.

•45 and who yet within are sunk into weak and bestial ugliness, and whom I grieve to have invested with the robe of manhood, are endeavoring to disinherit you from your patrimony of an earthly habitation, and are seizing all power on earth, and forcing you  
•50 to repair to your celestial home. Since, then, my welfare is affected, since our party-wall is flaming with fire, I feel compassion for your suffering, sympathize in your grief, read my groans<sup>1</sup> in your groans,<sup>2</sup> and find my loss in your adversity. Therefore, passing over nothing of what has happened, I will attain my own goal myself, and I will smite these men with vengeance answering to their sin, so far as I am able to extend the arm of my might. But since I cannot exceed the limit of my power, and it is not in my  
•55 control to root out the poison of this pestilence completely, I will follow the measure of my ability, and brand the men who are caught in these crooked vices with the mark of anathema.

'But it is fitting to ask Genius, who assists me in  
•60 the priestly office, to cast out, with the aiding presence of my judiciary power, with your assent and favoring help, and with the pastoral rod of excommunication, those men from the catalogue of the things of nature, from the bounds of my jurisdiction.  
•65 Hymen, the highly proved, will be the executor of this mission. In him shine the stars of glittering eloquence, and in his possession is placed the armory of the examining council.'

Then they rose, and, resting from their tears and  
•70 lament, bowed their heads in deep humility, and freely gave to Nature abundant signs of their gratitude due. And Hymen, who humbled himself on bended knee

<sup>1</sup> Reading *gemitum*, with B. and Migne.

<sup>2</sup> Reading *gemitu*, with B. and Migne.

in the immediate sight of Nature, declared himself obedient to the appointed mission. Then she marked and inscribed with a reed-pen a papyrus sheet with an ~~one~~ epistolary composition of this sort:

'Nature, by the grace of God delegated protectress<sup>1</sup> of the worldly realm, to Genius, her other self, greeting, and a wish that in everything he be befriended by the favors of fair fortune! Since similarities rejoice in a scorn of things unlike them, and in the friendly appearance of things like them, I, who find in thee, as in the mirror of Nature, myself again in marked resemblance, am bound to thee by the knot of most ardent love, so that I am with thee in all ~~one~~ things, advance in thy progress, or, in like measure, droop in thy failure. Therefore ought our love to be reciprocal, so that thou wouldest answer with equal affection, and make our fortunes one.<sup>2</sup> The evidence of evil committed tells thee fully, in the form of a ~~one~~ loud wail, of the shipwreck of the human race. For thou seest how men debase the original dignity of their natures with bestial pleasures, and transgress humanity's privileged state, changing in their degenerate practices to beasts, and how, in following their ~~one~~ own desires in the pursuit of lust, going to shipwreck in the whirlpools of intemperance, seething in the heat of avarice, flying upon the false wings of pride, giving way to the bites of envy, gilding others with the hypocrisy of flattery, they fall far from their ~~one~~ natural and noble state. No one is ready with medicinal remedies for these vicious diseases. No one restrains the torrent of these crimes with a dyke of defense. No harbor checks unchangeably the flood-tides of these evil deeds. Therefore the virtues, be- ~~one~~

<sup>1</sup> Migne reads *procreatrix*.

<sup>2</sup> Commencing a new sentence at *patrati*, with Migne.

ing wholly unable to bear the assault of such a hostile onset, have fled to us, as to a refuge of defense and a succor to their life. Since our common interests  
 325 are thrown into confusion by the fierce attack, I entreat thee with prayers, enjoin thee by the virtue of obedience, both warn as I command, and command as I warn, that thou banish all deception and excuse, and hasten thy approach to us, and that, with the  
 330 aiding presence of myself and my women, thou sever the children of abomination from the holy communion of our congregation, and, in the due solemnity of thine office, smite them with the hard rod of ex-communication.'

335 Thereupon she gave the letter, which had been sealed and marked with a signet, on which an artist's skill had graved the name and image of Nature, to her legate to deliver. Then Hymen, ending his acts of thanks with a graver countenance of joy, received  
 340 his appointed embassy, and, rousing his companions from dull idleness, bade them take up their instruments of music, and, stirring them from dumb silence, summon them to the measures of harmonious melody. Then caressing their instruments in a few  
 345 preludes, they struck out a sound of many notes in one, of quality unlike yet consonant, of manifold tone.

## METRE IX.

*Jam tuba terribili bellum clangore salutans.*

Now the trumpet's salute with terrible clang thundered war, telling of the kindred prologues to war, and marked the tumult with tumultuous bellowing. The horn tortured the air with unsubstantial wounds.  
 5 Its wild, unruly voice knew not how to obey the numbers of music, and scorned to favor art, and music

marveled at its lawless song. The clear, fair voice of the cithara, more sweetly than the others, offered the ear feasts of honeyed sound ; and, varying and adorning the character of its song, now feigned grief  $\approx$  in its tone and gave rise to tears, now offered a deceptive mimicry of laughter. The lyre, which sings always like a nightingale with lovely song, though more sweetly alluring, and which gathers the first of sleep for the eyes, silenced the murmurs of the  $\approx$  unhappy mind.<sup>1</sup> The pipe, which keeps vigil by night like an active sentinel, atoned to watchers for their loss of sleep. It laughed in the ears, so that the stony hardness of the heart became like wax,<sup>2</sup> and the harshness of the unmoved mind was forced to melt  $\approx$  and drive away its own severity. Drums, which came with dull sound, slowed the progress of this music and the keenness of the swift song. Yet was their resonance not without charm, if one struck these drums a stroke of gentle force, aroused them and tried them,  $\approx$  allied as they were in the deep volume<sup>3</sup> of their hollow air, with the touch of a friendly hand. The wind instruments made pleasant noise. Joined and then divided, divided and then joined, was the uneven equality of their song, their harmonious discord, their varied unity,  $\approx$  the concordant dissension of their voices. With common sound and beggarly voice rang the cymbals, the clamor of which never appeals to our ears, and which was hardly worthy to deserve the hearing of men. None was greater, better, or more agreeable than that which  $\approx$  by itself silenced these strains—the sweet song of the pentachord, whose echoes and sound<sup>4</sup> the common

<sup>1</sup> Placing a period after *mentis*.

<sup>2</sup> Reading *per quam sit cerea cordis*, with B.

<sup>3</sup> Reading *tractu*, with B. and Migne.

<sup>4</sup> Reading *vocem*, with Migne.

people who vie in song adore. While in rival tone  
it was thus contending with the cithara, there rose a  
• pleasant sound, hidden in the honey of the psaltery  
and sweetened with its flavor, bearing the slighter  
gifts of song. Sistra, which asked the touch of  
a girlish hand, together with women's voices, like  
prophets of Mars and war, sang the wonders of such  
•s music as had never been heard.

## PROSE IX.

*Igitur Hymenæo mysticæ legationis mysteriis  
indulgente.*

Then while Hymen was employed in the secret  
rites of his mystic embassy, Nature, in a sorrowful  
speech of wretched complaint, reviewed the wrongs  
of those by whose violent and disgraceful acts the  
•s glory of her state had felt the full injury of deep  
loss. And here she censured with the stings of re-  
proof, more sharply than the others, one who, more  
rudely than the rest, had taken pains to dishonor the  
orderly being of Nature. Although Fortune smiled  
• upon him with high favor, and though the gift—nay,  
the gifts—of knowledge were joined to him, and  
though Magnanimity brought him up, and Generosity  
taught him, yet because the whole mass works with  
a little sour leaven, the fall of one virtue was obscuring  
•s entirely the rise of the other virtues, the eclipse of  
one good quality was forcing the stars of the other good  
qualities to die away in dark retreat. Now when  
Generosity saw this censure aimed at her foster-child,  
she did not dare to adorn his faults with the cloak  
• of a defense, but, with low bending of her humbled  
head, sought the relief of tears.

But Nature, who considered what the bowing of the head and the flow of tears stood for, spoke to<sup>1</sup> Generosity gracious words, saying:

'O virgin, in the building of whose excellence the human race enters into the habitation of the virtues, through whom men attain the rewards of kindness and favor, through whom the ancient cycles of the golden age live again, through whom men bind themselves in the pact of warmest friendship, the eternal Being has begotten and produced with the everlasting kiss of His spirit, and has given me an own sister. Not only the natural tie of blood binds her to me, but the connection of pure love links us also. And because of this, thine even judgment does not allow thy will to wander from the consideration of my will. For such a union in symmetry, nay, a symmetry in unity, harmonizes our minds in firm peace, that not only is that union clothed in the express image of union, but even puts aside mere outward unity and tends towards the essence of identity. And so a wrong to the one, which does not attack the other, assails neither; a temptation for one subdues neither, if it does not threaten the other. He, then, who tries to weaken my name and renown by the loud blasphemy of shameless deeds, tries in the persistence of his evil vexation to detract from thy glory. He who abuses the gifts of Nature in the waste of ungoverned prodigality is stripped of the gifts of Fortune as a penalty for his lawless extravagance. Thus does the prostituted fellowship of Prodigality falsely profess the honorableness of Generosity. Thus, too, a torrent of wealth is turned off into the desert of poverty, brilliance of wisdom errs and degenerates into folly, magnanimous strength is relaxed into reckless daring.'

<sup>1</sup> Emending *Largitas* to *Largitati*.

Therefore I am wearied with surprise why, at a condemnation of him who tries more destructively than the others to ruin us, thou art not able to check the flood of tears.'

“ Then Generosity, drying and removing the river of tears from her countenance, raised again her bowed head to the skies and said :

“ O first foundation of everything in nature ! O special protection for all ! O queen of the region of earth ! O trusty agent of a principal above the heavens ; who, acting under the authority of the eternal master, dost not disturb thy faithful administration with any disobedience ; whom the whole world is bound by the demand of primal righteousness to obey ! As strong affinity and close relationship require, the golden chain of love connects me to thee. He, then, who sells his nature to ruin and abomination, and assails thee with insult and fierce rebellion, rebels against me with equal insolence and rage. Although, deceived by the shadowy forms of credulity, he believes that he is serving among my train, and although men who are lured by the flashy appearance of Prodigality smell the footsteps of Generosity there, yet they are anathematized from our favor and friendship to long banishment. But, inasmuch as it is ours to sympathize and condole with warped and straying error, I cannot be unmoved at the fatal sin of his irrational will.”

While the meeting in speech of question and answer was going on between these women, behold, to the applause and festivity of instruments of music, and of strange and striking appearance, Genius came before us. His stature, which was duly limited by the canon of the mean, neither complained of subtraction and curtailment, nor grieved at addition and excess. His head was clothed with locks of hoary whiteness.

and bore the marks of wintry age; yet his face was delicate with the smoothness of youth, and unfurrowed by any of the plow-marks of old age. His garments, whose workmanship followed nature, seemed now to be in flames of purple, now to be bright like hyacinth,<sup>93</sup> now to burn with scarlet, now to be a clearer white than lawn, not knowing the want of any one. On them images of things lived momentarily, and as quickly vanished, so as to elude our scrutiny and perception. He carried in his right hand a reed of <sup>100</sup> frail papyrus, which never rested from its occupation of writing; and in his left he bore an animal's skin from which a knife had cut and bared the shock of hair, and on this, by means of his compliant pen, he gave to images, which passed from the shadow of a ~~as~~<sup>105</sup> sketch to the truth of very being, the life of their kind. And when these slumbered in the death of deletion, others were called<sup>1</sup> to life in a new rising and birth. There Helen, half a goddess in her loveliness, the brilliancy of her beauty interposing for her,<sup>110</sup> could be called beauty. There the lightning-flash of boldness ruled in Turnus, strength in Hercules. There rose a giant's height in Capaneus; in Ulysses played a fox-like shrewdness. There Cato was intoxicated with the golden nectar of virtuous sobriety; Plato<sup>115</sup> shone with the sidereal splendor of genius. There the splendid tail of the peacock of Ciceronian eloquence glittered variously. There Aristotle involved his puzzling thoughts in concealing phrases. Then, after this serious drawing, the left hand came to the aid of the right, which had become tired with its work of constant delineation, as to the aid of a wearied sister, and assumed the office of designing, while the right hand took the writing surface. The

<sup>1</sup> Reading *revocabantur*, with Migne.

125 left hand forsook the path of true representation with false and limping imagery, and created figures of things, or rather the shadowy ghosts of figures, with incomplete depiction. For there Thersites, clothed in the raggedness of disgrace, asked the expertness of  
130 a more skilled artist. There Paris was subdued by the voluptuousness of carnal love. There Sinon's weapons were the subterfuges of trick and concealment. There the verses of Ennius, starved for beauty of thought, transgressed metrical art with un-  
135 bridled license. There Pacuvius, who knew not how to order the course of a story, placed the beginning of his composition at the end.

Then Truth, who followed in attendance, like the modest daughter of a father, assisted Genius in the  
140 skillful execution of the pictures, while he bent seriously over the work. Not by the common passion of Aphrodite had she been begotten, but she was sprung from the loving kiss alone of Nature and her son, when the Eternal Mind greeted matter, as it was  
145 considering the reflection of forms, and kissed it by the intermediate agency and intervention of an image. In her face was read the divinity of godlike beauty, which scorned our nature's mortality. Her raiment, glowing with the splendors of unwearied brilliancy,  
150 and eloquent of the hand of a heavenly maker, was uncorrupted by the moth of old age. It was joined to the virgin's body in such a close connection that no division ever separated them. Other garments, of unfamiliar nature, so to speak, supplementary to the  
155 former, now offered glimpses to our eyes, now stole from their gaze. Opposite stood Falsehood, hostile to Truth, and very watchful. Her countenance was clouded with the soot of dishonor, and confessed none of Nature's gifts, for old age had subjected it to hollow

creases, and drawn it all together in folds. Her head <sup>160</sup> was seen to be unclothed with covering hair. Nor did she compensate for the baldness by an enveloping robe; but an infinity of little patches, joined by a great number of threads, had composed a cloak for her. Secretly spying on the pictures of Truth, she rudely <sup>165</sup> marred whatever Truth harmoniously formed.

Nature at this gave free reins to her approach, and was seen to go solemnly to a solemn meeting. And to Genius, as he hastened to meet her, she offered her lips, which were not stirred with the poison <sup>170</sup> of any illicit passion, but which signified those embraces of the mystic love which show the harmony of spiritual affection. After the mutual rejoicing had been consummated in an end of satisfaction, Genius, with hand raised in request, enjoined silence, and, <sup>175</sup> following this, coined the material of his voice into this form of speech:

'O Nature, I do not believe that without the divine breath of inspiration has that imperial edict gone out from thine even judgment, to the effect that <sup>180</sup> all who try by abuse and neglect to reduce our laws to ruin should not rejoice in the high day of our festival, but should be smitten with the sword of anathema. And since this law and legitimate decree does not oppose the rule of justness, and since the <sup>185</sup> scales of thy careful judgment sit quiet on the balance-tongue of my consideration, I hasten more quickly to strengthen the ruling of thine edict. For though my mind, which has been tormented by the odious vices of men, and which has traveled into the depth <sup>190</sup> of sorrow, is unacquainted with the paradise of gladness, yet the beginning of delight and joy smells sweetly in this, that I see thee striving with me toward the attainment of vengeance due. And it is not strange

if in the harmonious union of our wills I find the music of concord, since one original thought and idea conforms us with each other, and has brought us into the same mind, since the official rank of one administration makes us alike, and since hypocritical love does not join our minds with the band of shallow affection, but the virtue of pure love dwells in the inner secret places of our souls.'

While Genius was limiting the course of his speech to these few words, Nature drew aside a little the shadows of sorrow with what was like the rising dawn of an exclamation, and, though with the honor of her position preserved, showed to Genius her proper gratitude. Then Genius, after laying aside his common garment, and being adorned more honorably with the higher ornaments of the sacerdotal vestment, called out from the secret places of his mind the order of excommunication referred to, under this form of words, and proceeding in this way of speech:

'By the authority of the Absolute Being and of His eternal thought, and with the approbation of the celestial soldiery, and the agreement of Nature and the assisting ministry of the attendant virtues beside, let him be separated from the kiss of heavenly love, as the desert of ingratitude demands, let him be degraded from the favor of Nature, let him be isolated from the harmonious assembly of the things of Nature, whoever turns awry the lawful course of love, or is often shipwrecked in gluttony, or swallows greedily the delirium of drunkenness, or thirsts in the fire of avarice, or ascends the shadowy pinnacle of insolent pride, or suffers the deep-seated destruction of envy, or keeps company with the false love of flattery. Let him who makes an irregular exception to the rule of love be deprived of the sign of love. Let him

who is deep in the abyss of gluttony be chastised <sup>230</sup> by shamefaced beggary. Let him who sleeps in the Lethean stream of drunkenness be tormented with the fires of perpetual thirst. Let him in whom burns the passion to possess incur the continual needs of poverty. Let him who, exalted on the precipice of <sup>235</sup> pride, throws out a spirit of arrogance, fall ingloriously into the valley of dejected humility. Let him who envies and gnaws like the moth of detraction at the riches of another's happiness first find himself an enemy to himself. Let him who hunts gifts from <sup>240</sup> the rich by the hypocrisy of flattery be cheated by a reward of deceptive worth.'

After Genius, in the utterance of this anathema, had made an end to his speech, the assembly of the women approved of the curse with quick word of <sup>245</sup> ratification, and confirmed his edict. Then the lights of the tapers in their hands became drowsy, sank to the earth with a scorn of extinction, and seemed to be fallen asleep. With the mirror of this visionary sight taken away, the previous view of the mystic <sup>250</sup> apparition left me, who had been fired by ecstasy, in sleep.

Wright appends the sentence, *Explicit Alani Minimi Capella de Con-*  
*questu seu Planctu Naturæ.* This is omitted in Migne's *Patrologia.*



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